

THE
BUSY BODY.

A
COMEDY.

As it is Acted at the

THEATRES - ROYAL

IN

Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden.

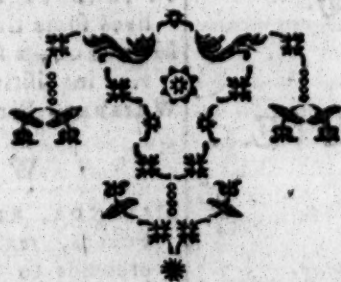
By Mrs. CENTLIVE.

Quem tulit ad scenam ventoso gloria curru,
Exanimat lentus spectator, sedulus inflat.

Sic leve, sic parvum est, animum quod laudis avarum

Subruit aut reficit.

HORAT. Epist. Lib. II. Ep. 1.



L O N D O N :

Printed for HARRISON and Co. No 18, Paternoster-Row; and Sold, likewise by
J. WENMAN, Fleet-Street; and all other Booksellers.

M DCC LXXIX,

PROLOGUE.

By Mr. BAKER.

TH^O modern prophets were expos'd of late,
The author could not prophesy her fate;
If with such scenes an audience had been fir'd,
The poet must have really been inspir'd.
But these, alas! are melancholy days
For modern prophets, and for modern plays.
Yet since prophetic lyes please fools of fashion,
And women are so fond of agitation;
To men of sense I'll prophesy a-new,
And tell you wond'rous things, that will prove true:
Undaunted colonels will to camps repair;
Assur'd there'll be no skirmishes this year;
On our own terms will flow the wish'd-for peace,
All wars, except 'twixt man and wife, shall cease.
The grand monarch may wish his son a throne,
But hardly will advance to lose his own.
This season most things bear a smiling face;
But play'rs in summer have a dismal case,
Since your appearance only is our *Act of Grace*.
Court ladies will to country seats be gone,
My lord can't all the year live great in town;
Where wanting Operas, Ballet, and a Play,
They'll sigh, and stitch a gown to pass the time away.
Gay city wives at Tunbridge will appear,
Whose husbands long have labour'd for an heir;
Where many a courtier may their wants relieve,
But by the waters only they conceive.
The Fleet-street sempstresses—toast of Temple sparks,
That runs spruce neckcloths for attorneys clerks,
At Cupid's Gardens will her hours regale,
Sing fair Dorinda; and drink bottled-ale.
At all assemblies rakes are up and down,
And gamesters—where they think they are not known.
Should I denounce our Author's fate to-day,
To cry down prophecies, you'd damn the play;
Yet whims like these have sometimes made you laugh;
'Tis tattling all, like Isaac Bickerstaff.
Since war and places claim the bards that write,
Be kind, and bear a woman's treat to night;
Let your indulgence all her fears allay,
And none but women-haters damn this play.

EPILOGUE.

IN me you see one Busy Body more;
Tho' you may have enough of one before.
With Epilogues, the Busy Body's way,
We strive to help, but sometimes mar a play.
At this mad sessions, half condemn'd ere try'd,
Some, in three days, have been turn'd off and dy'd.
In spite of parties their attempts are vain;
For, like false prophets, they ne'er rise again;
Too late, when cast, your favour one beseeches,
And Epilogues prove execution-speeches.

Yet sure I spy no Busy Bodies here,
And one may pass, since they do ev'ry where.
Sour criticks, time, and breath, and censures waste,
And baulk your pleasures, to refine your taste:
One busy Don ill-tim'd high tenets preaches;
Another yearly shows himself in speeches:
Some sniv'ling cits would have a peace for spite,
To starve those warriors who so bravely fight;
Still of a foe upon his knees afraid,
Whose well-bang'd troops want money, heart, and bread;
Old beaux, who none, not e'en themselves can please,
Are busy still, for nothing—but to teize;
The young so busy to engage a heart,
The mischief done, are busy most to part:
Ungrateful wretches, who still cross one's will,
When they more kindly might be busy still;
One to a husband, who ne'er dreamt of horns,
Shows how dear spouse with friend his brows adorns;
Th' officious tell-tale soul (he shou'd repent it)
Parts three kind souls that liv'd at peace contented;
Some with law quirks set houses by the ears;
With physick one what he would heal impairs;
Like that dark mop'd-up fry, that neighb'ring curse,
Who to remove love's pains bestow a worse.
Since then this meddling tribe infest the age,
Bear one a while expos'd upon the stage;
Let none but Busy Bodies vent their spite,
And, with good-humour, pleasure crown the night.

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N,

SIR GEORGE AIRY, a Gentleman of four thousand
a Year, in love with Miranda.
SIR FRANCIS GRIPE, Guardian to Miranda
and Marplot, Father to Charles, in love with
Miranda.
CHARLES, Friend to Sir George, in love with
Isabinda.
SIR JEALOUS TRAFFICK, a Merchant that had
lived some time in Spain, Father to Isabinda.
MARPLOT, a sort of silly Fellow, cowardly, but
very inquisitive to know every body's Business.
WHISPER, Servant to Charles.

W O M E N.

MIRANDA, an Heiress, worth thirty thousand
Pounds, really in love with Sir George, but
pretends to be so with her Guardian Sir Francis.
ISABINDA, Daughter to Sir Jealous, in love
with Charles, but designed for a Spanish Mer-
chant by her Father.
PATCH, her Woman.
SCENTWELL, Woman to Miranda.

T H E B U S Y B O D Y .

ACT I. SCENE, *the Park.*

Sir George Airy meeting Charles.

Cha. **H**A! Sir George Airy! a birding thus early! What forbidden game rous'd you so soon? for no lawful occasion could invite a person of your figure abroad at such unfashionable hours.

Sir Geo. There are some men, Charles, whom fortune has left free from inquietudes, who are diligently studious to find out ways and means to make themselves uneasy.

Cha. Is it possible that any thing in nature can ruffle the temper of a man, whom the four seasons of the year compliment with as many thousand pounds, nay, and a father at rest with his ancestors?

Sir Geo. Why there it is now! A man that wants money thinks none can be unhappy that has it; but my affairs are in such a whimsical posture, that it will require a calculation of my nativity to find if my gold will relieve me or not.

Cha. Ha, ha, ha! never consult the stars about that; gold has a power beyond them. 'Gold unlocks the midnight councils; gold outdoes the wind, becalms the ship, or fills her sails; gold is omnipotent below; it makes whole armies fight, or fly; it buys even souls, and bribes the wretches to betray their country.' Then what can thy business be, that gold won't serve thee in?

Sir Geo. Why, I'm in love.

Cha. In love!—Ha, ha, ha, ha! in love!—Ha, ha, ha! With what, pr'ythee? a cherubim?

Sir Geo. No, with a woman.

Cha. A woman! good. Ha, ha, ha! and gold not help thee!

Sir Geo. But suppose I'm in love with two——

Cha. Ay, if thou'rt in love with two hundred, gold will fetch 'em, I warrant thee, boy. But who are they? who are they? come.

Sir Geo. One is a lady whose face I never saw, but witty as an angel; the other beautiful as Venus——

Cha. And a fool.

Sir Geo. For aught I know, for I never spoke to her; but you can inform me: I am charm'd for the wit of one, and die for the beauty of the other.

Cha. And pray, which are you in quest of now?

Sir Geo. I prefer the sensual pleasure: I'm for her I've seen, who is thy father's ward, Miranda.

Cha. Nay, then I pity you; for the Jew, my father, will no more part with her and thirty thousand pounds, than he would with a guinea to keep me from starving.

Sir Geo. Now you see gold can't do every thing, Charles.

Cha. Yes, for 'tis her gold that bars my father's gate against you.

Sir Geo. Why, if he is this avaricious wretch, how can'st thou by such a liberal education?

Cha. Not a soue out of his pocket, I assure you: I had an uncle who defrayed that charge; but for some little wildness of youth, though he made me his heir, left dad my guardian till I came to years of discretion, which I presume the old gentleman will never think I am; and now he has got the estate into his clutches, it does me no more good than if it lay in Prester John's dominions.

Sir Geo. What, can'st thou find no stratagem to redeem it?

Cha. I have made many essays to no purpose; tho' want, the mistress of invention, still tempts me on, yet still the old fox is too cunning for me—I am upon my last project, which, if it fails, then for my last refuge, a brown musquet.

Sir Geo. What is't? Can I assist thee?

Cha. Not yet; when you can, I have confidence enough in you to ask it.

Sir Geo. I am always ready. But what does he intend to do with Miranda? Is she to be sold in private? Or will he put her up by way of auction, at who bids most? If so, egad, I'm for him; my gold, as you say, shall be subservient to my pleasure.

Cha. To deal ingenuously with you, Sir George, I know very little of her, or home; for since my uncle's death, and my return from travel, I have never been well with my father; he thinks my expences too great, and I his allowance too little: he never sees me, but he quarrels; and to avoid that, I shun his house as much as possible. The report is, he intends to marry her himself.

Sir Geo. Can she consent to it?

Cha. Yes, faith, so they say; but I tell you, I am wholly ignorant of the matter. 'Miranda and I are like two violent members of a country party; I can scarce allow her beauty, tho' all the world does; nor she me civility, for that contempt.' I fancy she plays the mother-in-law already, and sets the old gentleman on to do mischief.

Sir Geo. Then I've your free consent to get her.

Cha. Ay, and my helping hand if occasion be.

Sir Geo. Poh, yonder's a fool coming this way, let's avoid him.

Cha. What, Marplot? No, no, he's my instrument; there's a thousand conveniences in him! he'll lend me his money when he has any; run of my errands, and be proud on't; in short, he'll pimp for me, lye for me, drink for me, do any thing but fight for me, and that I trust to my own arm for.

THE BUSY BODY.

Sir Geo. Nay, then he's to be endur'd; I never knew his qualifications before.

Enter Marplot, with a patch cross his face.

Mar. Dear Charles, yours—Ha! *Sir George* *Airy*; the man in the world, I have an ambition to be known to. [*Aside.*] Give me thy hand, dear boy.

Cba. A good assurance! But hark ye, how came your beautiful countenance clouded in the wrong place?

Marp. I must confess 'tis a little *mal-a-propos*; but no matter for that. A word with you, Charles: Pr'ythee, introduce me to *Sir George*—he is a man of wit, and I'd give ten guineas to—

Cba. When you have 'em, you mean.

Marp. Ay, when I have 'em; pugh, pox, you cut the thread of my discourse—I would give ten guineas, I say, to be rank'd in his acquaintance.

'Well, 'tis a vast addition to a man's fortune, according to the rout of the world, to be seen in the company of leading men; for then we are all thought to be politicians, or whigs, or jacks, or high fliers, or low fliers, or levellers—and so forth; for you must know, we all herd in parties now.

Cba. Then a fool for diversion is out of fashion, I find.

Marp. Yes, without it be a mimicking fool; and they are darlings every where; but—pr'ythee introduce me.

Cba. Well, on condition you'll give us a true account how you come by that mourning nose, I will.

Marp. I'll do it.

Cba. *Sir George*, here's a gentleman has a passionate desire to kiss your hand.

Sir Geo. Oh, I honour men of the sword; and I presume this gentleman is lately come from Spain or Portugal—by his scars.

Marp. No, really, *Sir George*, mine sprung from civil fury. Happening last night into the Groom Porter's—I had a strong inclination to go ten guineas with a sort of a, sort of a—kind of a milk-fop, as I thought. A pox of the dice, he flung out, and my pockets being empty, as Charles knows they often are, he prov'd a surly North Briton, and broke my face for my deficiency.

Sir Cba. Ha! ha! and did not you draw?

Marp. Draw, Sir; why, I did but lay my hand upon my sword to make a swift retreat, and he roar'd out, "Now the deed a ma sol, Sir, gin ye touch yer steel, I'll whip mine through yer wem."

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha!

Cba. Ha, ha, ha! safe was the word: so you walk'd off, I suppose.

Marp. Yes, for I avoid fighting, to be serviceable to my friends, you know—

Sir Geo. Your friends are much obliged to you, Sir. I hope you'll rank me in that number.

Marp. *Sir George*, a bow from the side-box, or to be seen in your chariot, binds me ever yours.

Sir Geo. Trifles! you may command 'em when you please.

Cba. Provided he may command you.

Marp. Me! why I live for no other purpose—*Sir George*, I have the honour to be caress'd by most of the reigning toasts of the town. I'll tell 'em you are the finest gentleman—

Sir Geo. No, no, pr'ythee let me alone to tell the ladies—my parts. Can you convey a letter upon occasion, or deliver a message with an air of business, ha?

Marp. With the assurance of a page, and the gravity of a statesman.

Sir Geo. You know *Miranda*.

Marp. What, my sister ward? Why, her guardian is mine, we are fellow-sufferers. Ah! he is a co-

vetous, cheating, sanctified curmudgeon; that *Sir Francis Gripe* is a damn'd old—

Cba. I suppose, friend, you forget that he is my father.

Marp. I ask your pardon, Charles; but it is for your sake I hate him. Well, I say the world is mistaken in him; his outside piety makes him every man's executor; and his inside cunning makes him every heir's jailor. Egad, Charles, I'm half persuaded that thou'rt some ward too, and never of his getting: for thou art as honest a debauchee as ever cuckolded man of quality.

Sir Geo. A pleasant fellow.

Cba. The dog is diverting sometimes, or there would be no enduring his impertinence: he is pressing to be employed, and willing to execute; but some ill fate generally attends all he undertakes, and he oftener spoils an intrigue than helps it.

Marp. If I miscarry, 'tis none of my fault: I follow my instructions.

Cba. Yes, witness the merchant's wife.

Marp. Pish, pox, that was an accident.

Sir Geo. What was it, pr'ythee?

Cba. Why, you must know, I had lent a certain merchant my hunting horses, and was to have met his wife in his absence: sending him along with my groom to make the compliment, and to deliver a letter to the lady at the same time; what does he do, but gives the husband the letter, and offers her the horses.

Marp. I remember you was even with me, for you deny'd the letter to be yours, and swore I had a design upon her, which my bones paid for.

Cba. Come, *Sir George*, let's walk round, if you are not engag'd; for I have sent my man upon a little earnest business, and I have order'd him to bring me the answer into the Park.

Marp. Business, and I not know it! Egad I'll watch him.

Sir Geo. I must beg your pardon, Charles, I am to meet your father.

Cba. My father!

Sir Geo. Ay! and about the oddest bargain perhaps you ever heard of; but I'll not impart till I know the success.

Marp. What can his business be with *Sir Francis*? Now would I give all the world to know it; why the devil should not one know every man's concern!

[*Aside.*]

Cba. Prosperity to't, whatever it be. I have private affairs too; over a bottle we'll compare notes.

Marp. Charles knows I love a glass as well as any man; I'll make one; shall it be to night? And I long to know their secrets.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Whisper.

Whisp. Sir, Sir, Mrs. Patch says *Isabinda*'s Spanish father has quite spoil'd the plot, and she can't meet you in the Park; but he infallibly will go out this afternoon, she says; but I must step again to know the hour.

Marp. What did *Whisper* say now? I shall go stark mad, if I am not let into this secret.

[*Aside.*]

Cba. Curse! misfortune! come along with me, my heart feels pleasure at her name. *Sir George*, yours; we'll meet at the old place the usual hour.

Sir Geo. Agreed; I think I see *Sir Francis* yonder.

[*Exit.*]

Cba. Marplot, you must excuse me, I am engag'd.

[*Exit.*]

Marp. Engag'd; Egad I'll engage my life I'll know what your engagement is.

[*Exit.*]

Miran. [*Coming out of a chair.*] Let the chair

wait: my servant that dog'd Sir George, said he was in the Park.

Enter Patch.

—Ha! Miss Patch alone! Did not you tell me you had contriv'd a way to bring Isabinda to the Park?

Patch. Oh, Madam, your ladyship can't imagine what a wretched disappointment we have met with: just as I had fetch'd a suit of my clothes for disguise, comes my old master into his closet, which is right against her chamber-door; this struck us into a terrible fright—At length I put on a grave face, and asked him if he was at leisure for his chocolate, in hopes to draw him out of his hole; but he snap'd my nose off; No, I shall be busy here these two hours. At which, my poor mistress, seeing no way of escape, ordered me to wait on your ladyship with the sad relation.

Miran. Unhappy Isabinda! Was ever any thing so unaccountable as the humour of Sir Jealous Traffick!

Patch. Oh, Madam, 'tis his living so long in Spain; he vows he'll spend half his estate, but he'll be a parliament-man, on purpose to bring in a bill for women to wear veils; and the other odious Spanish customs—He swears it is the height of impudence to have a woman seen bare-fac'd even at church, and scarce believes there's a true begotten child in the city.

Miran. Ha, ha, ha! how the old fool torments himself! Suppose he could introduce his rigid rules, —does he think we could not match them in contrivance? No, no, let the tyrant man make what laws he will, if there's a woman under the government, I warrant she finds a way to break 'em. Is his mind set upon the Spaniard for his son-in-law still?

Patch. Ay, and he expects him by the next fleet, which drives his daughter to melancholy and despair; but, Madam, I find you retain the same gay, cheerful spirit you had, when I waited on your ladyship—My lady is mighty good-humour'd, too: and I have found a way to make Sir Jealous believe I am wholly in his interest, when my real design is to serve her; he makes me her jailor, and I set her at liberty.

Miran. I knew thy prolific brain would be of singular service to her, or I had not parted with thee to her father.

Patch. But, Madam, the report is, that you are going to marry your guardian.

Miran. It is necessary such a report should be, Patch.

Patch. But is it true, Madam?

Miran. That's not absolutely necessary.

Patch. I thought it was only the old strain! coaxing him still for your own, and railing at all the young fellows about town: in my mind, now, you are as ill-plagu'd with your guardian, Madam, as my lady is with her father.

Miran. No, I have liberty, wench; that she wants; what would she give now to be in this *disbâllée*, in the—open air; nay, more, in pursuit of the young fellow she likes? for that's my case, I assure you.

Patch. As for that, Madam, she's even with you; for though she can't come abroad, we have a way to bring him home, in spite of old Argus.

Miran. Now, Patch, your opinion of my choice, for here he comes—Ha! my guardian with him! What can be the meaning of this? I'm sure Sir Francis can't know me in this dress—Let's observe 'em.

[They withdraw.]

Enter Sir Francis Gripe and Sir George Airy.

Sir Fran. Verily, Sir George, thou wilt repent throwing away thy money so; for I tell thee sincerely—Miranda, my charge, does not love a young fellow: they are all vicious, and seldom make good

husbands: in sober sadness she cannot abide 'em.

Miran. *[Peeping.]* In sober sadness you are mistaken—What can this mean?

Sir Geo. Look ye, Sir Francis, whether she can or cannot abide young fellows; is not the business: Will you take the fifty guineas?

Sir Fran. In good troth, I will not—for I knew thy father, he was a hearty wary man, and I cannot consent that his son should squander away what he saved, to no purpose.

Miran. *[Peeping.]* Now in the name of wonder, what bargain can he be driving about me for fifty guineas?

Patch. I wish it ben't for the first night's lodging, Madam.

Sir Geo. Well, Sir Francis, since you are so conscientious for my father's sake, then permit me the favour gratis.

Miran. *[Peeping.]* The favour! O' my life, I believe 'tis as you said, Patch.

Sir Fran. No, verily, if thou dost not buy thy experience, thou wilt never be wise; therefore give me a hundred, and try fortune.

Sir Geo. The scruples arose, I find, from the scanty sum—Let me see—a hundred guineas—

[Takes 'em out of a purse and chinks 'em.] Ha! they have a very pretty sound, and a very pleasing look—But then, Miranda—But if she should be cruel—

Miran. *[Peeping.]* As ten to one I shall—

Sir Fran. Ay, do consider on't. He, he, he, he!

Sir Geo. No, I'll do't.

Patch. Do't!—what whether you will or no, Madam?

Sir Geo. Come, to the point; here's the gold, sum up the conditions—

Sir Fran. *[Pulling out a paper.]*

Miran. *[Peeping.]* Ay, for Heaven's sake do, for my expectation is on the rack.

Sir Fran. Well, at your peril be it.

Sir Geo. Ay, ay, go on.

Sir Fran. Imprimis, you are to be admitted into my house, in order to move your suit to Miranda, for the space of ten minutes, without less or molestation, provided I remain in the same room.

Sir Geo. But out of ear-shot.

Sir Fran. Well, well, I don't desire to hear what you say: Ha, ha, ha! in consideration I am to have that purse and a hundred guineas.

Sir Geo. Take it— *[Gives him the purse.]*

Miran. *[Peeping.]* So, 'tis well it's no worse; I'll fit you both—

Sir Geo. And this agreement is to be performed to-day.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay, the sooner the better. Poor fool, how Miranda and I shall laugh at him—Well, Sir George, ha, ha, ha! take the last sound of your guineas. Ha, ha, ha! *[Chinks them.—Exit.]*

Miran. *[Peeping.]* Sure he does not know I am Miranda.

Sir Geo. A very extraordinary bargain I have made, truly, if she should be really in love with this old cuss, now—Psha, that's morally impossible—But then what hopes have I to succeed? I never spoke to her—

Miran. *[Peeping.]* Say you so? Then I'm safe.

Sir Geo. What tho' my tongue never spoke, my eyes said a thousand things, and my hopes flatter'd me her's answer'd 'em. If I'm lucky—if not, it is but a hundred guineas thrown away.

Miran. *[Peeping.]* And Patch come forward.

Miran. Upon what, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Ha! my incognita—upon a woman, Madam.

Miran. They are the worst things you can deal in, and damage the soonest; your very breath destroys 'em, and I fear you'll never see your return, Sir George; ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Were they more brittle than china, and dropped to pieces with a touch, every atom of her I have ventur'd at, if she is but mistress of thy wit, balances ten times the sum—Pr'ythee, let me see thy face.

Miran. By no means; that may spoil your opinion of my sense—

Sir Geo. Rather confirm it, Madam.

Patch. So rob the lady of your gallantry, Sir.

Sir Geo. No, child, a dish of chocolate never spoils my dinner; the other lady, I design a set meal; so there's no danger—

Miran. Matrimony! ha, ha, ha! What crimes have you committed against the god of love, that he should revenge 'em so severely, to stamp husband upon your forehead?

Sir Geo. For my folly, in having so often met you here, without pursuing the laws of nature, and exercising her command—But I resolve, ere we part now, to know who you are, where you live, and what kind of flesh and blood your face is; therefore unmask, and don't put me to the trouble of doing it for you.

Miran. My face is the same flesh and blood with my hand, Sir George, which if you'll be so rude to provoke—

Sir Geo. You'll apply it to my cheek—The ladies favours are always welcome; but I must have that cloud withdrawn. [*Taking hold of her.*] Remember you are in the Park, child; and what a terrible thing would it be to lose this pretty white hand?

Miran. And how will it sound in a chocolate-house, that Sir George Airy rudely pull'd off a lady's mask, when he had given her his honour that he never would, directly nor indirectly, endeavour to know her till she gave him leave?

Patch. I wish we were safe out.

Sir Geo. But if that lady thinks fit to pursue and meet me at every turn, like some troubled spirit, shall I be blam'd if I enquire into the reality? I would have nothing dissatisfied in a female shape.

Miran. What shall I do! [*Pauses.*]

Sir Geo. Aye, pr'ythee, consider, for thou shalt find me very much at thy service.

Patch. Suppose, Sir, the lady should be in love with you.

Sir Geo. Oh! I'll return the obligation in a moment.

Patch. And marry her?

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha! that's not the way to love her, child.

Miran. If he discovers me, I shall die—Which way shall I escape?—Let me see. [*Pauses.*]

Sir Geo. Well, Madam—

Miran. I have it—Sir George, 'tis fit you should allow something; if you'll excuse my face, and turn your back (if you look upon me, I shall sink, even mask'd as I am) I will confess why I have engaged you so often, who I am, and where I live.

Sir Geo. Well, to shew you I am a man of honour, I accept the conditions. Let me but once know those, and the face won't be long a secret to me.

Patch. What mean you, Madam?

Miran. To get off.

Sir Geo. 'Tis something indecent to turn one's back upon a lady; but you command, and I obey. [*Turns his back.*] Come, Madam, begin—

Miran. First then, it was my unhappy lot to see you at Paris, [*Draws back a little while and speaks*]

at a ball upon a birth-day; your shape and air charm'd my eyes; your wit and complaisance my soul; and from that fatal night I lov'd you. [*Drawing back.*]

And when you left the place, grief seiz'd me so,

No rest my heart, no sleep my eyes could know.

Last, I resolv'd a hazardous point to try,

And quit the place in search of liberty. [*Exit.*]

Sir Geo. Excellent—I hope she's handsome—

Well, now, Madam, to the other two things: your name, and where you live?—I am a gentleman, and this confession will not be lost upon me.—Nay, pr'ythee, don't weep, but go on—for I find my heart melts in thy behalf—speak quickly, or I shall turn about—Not yet—Poor lady, she expects I should comfort her; and, to do her justice, she has said enough to encourage me. [*Turns about.*] Ha! gone! the devil! jilt! Why what a tale she has invented of Paris, balls, and birth-days!—Egad I'd give ten guineas to know who the gipsy is—A curse of my folly—I deserve to lose her; what woman can forgive a man that turns his back!

The bold and resolute in love and war,

To conquer, take the right and swiftest way:

The boldest lover soonest gains the fair,

As courage makes the rudest force obey.

Take no denial, and the dames adore ye,

Closely pursue them, and they fall before ye.

ACT II.

SCENE, Sir Francis Gripe's House.

Enter Sir Francis Gripe and Miranda.

Sir Fran. HA, ha, ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Oh, I shall die with laughing—The most romantic adventure—Ha, ha, ha! What does the odious young fop mean? A hundred pieces to talk ten minutes with me; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fran. And I am to be by too, there's the jest: Adod, if it had been in private, I should not have car'd to trust the young dog.

Miran. Indeed and indeed, but you might, Gardy. —Now methinks there's nobody handsomer than you: So neat, so clean, so good-humour'd, and so loving—

Sir Fran. Pretty rogue, pretty rogue; and so thou shalt find me, if thou dost prefer thy Gardy before these caperers of the age; thou shalt out-shine the Queen's box on an opera night; thou shalt be the envy of the ring (for I will carry thee to Hyde-Park) and thy equipage shall surpass the what d'ye call 'em ambassador's.

Miran. Nay, I am sure the discreet part of my sex will envy me more for the inside furniture, when you are in it, than my outside equipage.

Sir Fran. A cunning baggage! faith thou art, and a wise one too; and to shew thee thou hast not chosen amiss, I'll this moment disinherit my son, and settle my whole estate upon thee.

Miran. There's an old rogue now! [*Aside.*] No, Gardy, I would not have your name so black in the world—You know my father's will runs, that I am not to possess my estate, without your consent, till I am five-and-twenty; you shall only abate the odd seven years, and make me mistress of my estate to-day, and I'll make you master of my person to-morrow.

Sir Fran. Humph! that may not be safe—No, Chargy, I'll settle it upon thee for pin-mony; and that will be every bit as well, thou know'st.

Miran. Unconscionable old wretch! bribe me with my own money!—Which way shall I get out of his hands!—
[*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Well, what art thou thinking on, my girl, ha? how to banter Sir George?

Miran. I must not pretend to banter; he knows my tongue too well. [*Aside.*] No, Gardy, I have thought of a way that will confound him more than all I could say, if I should talk to him seven years.

Sir Fran. How's that? Oh! I'm transported, I'm ravish'd, I'm mad—

Miran. It would make you mad if you knew all. [*Aside.*] I'll not answer him a word, but be dumb to all he says—

Sir Fran. Dumb! good; ha, ha, ha! Excellent, ha, ha! I think I have you now, Sir George; dumb! he'll go distracted—Well, she's the wittiest rogue—Ha, ha, dumb! I can but laugh, ha, ha! to think how damn'd mad he'll be, when he finds he has given his money away for a dumb show. Ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Nay, Gardy, if he did but know my thoughts of him, it would make him ten times madder. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fran. Ay, so it would, Chargy; to hold him in such derision, to scorn to answer him, to be dumb! Ha, ha, ha!

Enter Charles,

Sir Fran. How now, sirrah! Who let you in?

Cba. My necessities, Sir.

Sir Fran. Sir, your necessities are very impertinent, and ought to have sent before they entered.

Cba. Sir, I knew 'twas a word would gain admittance no where,

Sir Fran. Then, sirrah, how durst you rudely thrust that upon your father, which nobody else would admit?

Cba. Sure the name of a son is a sufficient plea. I ask this lady's pardon, if I have intruded.

Sir Fran. Ay, ay, ask her pardon and her blessing too, if you expect any thing from me.

Miran. I believe yours, Sir Francis, in a purse of guineas, would be more material. Your son may have business with you, I'll retire.

Sir Fran. I guess his business, but I'll dispatch him. I expect the knight every minute; you'll be in readiness?

Miran. Certainly! My expectation is more upon the wing than yours, old gentleman. [*Exit.*]

Sir Fran. Well, Sir!

Cba. Nay, it is very ill, Sir; my circumstances are, I'm sure.

Sir Fran. And what's that to me, Sir? Your management should have made them better.

Cba. If you please to intrust me with the management of my estate, I shall endeavour it, Sir.

Sir Fran. What, to set upon a card, and buy a lady's favour at the price of a thousand pieces, to dig out an equipage for a wench, or by your carelessness enrich your steward to fine for sheriff or put up for parliament-man?

Cba. I hope I shall not spend it in this way. However, I ask only for what my uncle left me; yours you may dispose of as you please, Sir.

Sir Fran. That I shall, out of your reach, I assure you, Sir. Adod, these young fellows think old men set estates for nothing but them to squander away in gaming, wenching, drinking, dressing, and so forth.

Cba. I think I was born a gentleman, Sir! I'm sure my uncle bred me like one.

Sir Fran. From which you would infer, Sir, that gaming, whoring, and the pox, are requisites to a gentleman.

Cba. Monstrous! when I would ask him only for a support, he falls into these unmannerly reproaches. I must, though against my will, employ invention, and by stratagem relieve myself. [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Sirrah, what is it you mutter, sirrah, ha? [*Holds up his cane.*] I say you sha'n't have a groat out of my hands till I please—and may be I'll never please, and what's that to you?

Cba. Nay, to be robb'd, or to have one's throat cut, is not much—

Sir Fran. What's that, sirrah? Would ye rob me, or cut my throat, ye rogue?

Cba. Heaven forbid, Sir—I said no such thing.

Sir Fran. Mercy on me! What a plague it is to have a son of one-and-twenty, who wants to elbow one out of one's life, to edge himself into the estate!

Enter Marplot.

Marp. Egad he's here—I was afraid I had lost him. His secret could not be with his father, his wants are public there—Guardian—your servant, Charles. I know by that sorrowful countenance of thine, the old man's fist is as close as his strong box.—But I'll help thee.

Sir Fran. So: here's another extravagant coxcomb, that will spend his fortune before he comes to't; but he shall pay swingeing interest, and so let the fool go on—Well, what! does necessity bring you too, Sir?

Marp. You have hit, it Guardian—I want a hundred pounds.

Sir Fran. For what?

Marp. Pogh, for a hundred things: I can't for my life tell you for what.

Cba. Sir, I suppose I have received all the answer I am like to have.

Marp. Oh, the devil, if he gets out before me, I shall lose him again.

Sir Fran. Ay, Sir, and you may be marching as soon as you please—I must see a change in your temper ere you find one in mine.

Marp. Pray, Sir, dispatch me; the money, Sir; I'm in mighty haste.

Sir Fran. Fool, take this, and go to the cashier, I sha'n't be long plagu'd with thee. [*Gives him a note.*]

Marp. Devil take the cashier, I shall certainly have Charles gone before I come back again. [*Runs out.*]

Cba. Well, Sir, I take my leave—But remember, you expose an only son to all the miseries of wretched poverty, which too often lays the plan for scenes of mischief.

Sir Fran. Stay, Charles, I have a sudden thought come into my head, may prove to thy advantage.

Cba. Ha, does he relent! [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. My Lady Wrinkle, worth forty thousand pounds, sets up for a handsome young husband; she prais'd thee t'other day: though the match-makers can get twenty guineas for a sight of her, I can introduce thee for nothing.

Cba. My lady Wrinkle, Sir! why she has but one eye.

Sir Fran. Then she'll see but half your extravagance, Sir.

Cba. Condemn me to such a piece of deformity! Toothless! dirty, wry-neck'd, hunch-back'd hag!

Sir Fran. Hunch-back'd! so much the better, then she has a rest for her misfortunes; for thou wilt load her swingeingly. Now I warrant you think this is no offer of a father: forty thousand pounds is nothing with you.

Cba. Yes, Sir, I think it is too much; a young beautiful woman with half the money would be more agreeable.—I thank you, Sir; but you chose better for yourself, I find.

Sir Fran. Out of my doors, you dog; you pretend to meddle with my marriage, firrah?

Cha. Sir, I obey; but—

Sir Fran. But me no buts—Be gone, Sirs: dare to ask me for money again—Refuse forty thousand pounds! Out of my doors, I say, without reply.

[*Exit Charles.*]

Enter Servant.

Serv. One Sir George Airy enquires for you, Sir.

Enter Marplot, running.

Marp. Ha! gone!—is Charles gone, guardian?

Sir Fran. Yes; and I desire your wife worship to walk after him.

Marp. Nay, egad, I shall run, I tell you but that. Ah, pox of this cashier for detaining me so long: where the devil shall I find him now? I shall certainly lose this secret.

[*Exit hastily.*]

Sir Fran. What is the fellow distracted?—Desire Sir George to walk up.—Now for a trial of skill that will make me happy, and him a fool: ha, ha, ha! in my mind he looks like an ass already.

Enter Sir George.

Sir Fran. Well, Sir George, do you hold in the same mind, or would you capitulate? ha, ha, ha! look, here are the guineas. [*Chinks 'em.*] Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Not if they were twice the sum, Sir Francis: therefore be brief, call in the lady, and take your post.—If she's a woman, and not seduced by witchcraft to this old rogue, I'll make his heart ach; for if she has but one grain of inclination about her, I'll vary a thousand shapes but find it.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Agreed—Miranda! there, Sir George, try your fortune.

[*Takes out his watch.*]

Sir Geo. So from the eastern chambers breaks the sun, Disperses the clouds, and gilds the vales below.

[*Salutes her.*]

Sir Fran. Hold, Sir, kissing was not in our agreement.

Sir Geo. Oh! that's by way of prologue: pry-thee, old mammon, to thy post.

Sir Fran. Well, young Timon, 'tis now four exactly; ten minutes, remember, is your utmost limit, not a minute more. [*Retires to the bottom of the stage.*]

Sir Geo. Madam, whether you'll excuse or blame my love, the author of this rash proceeding, depends upon your pleasure, as also the life of your admirer: your sparkling eyes speak a heart susceptible of love; your vivacity, a soul too delicate to admit the embraces of decayed mortality.

Miran. [*Aside.*] Oh! that I durst speak—

Sir Geo. Shake off this tyrant Guardian's yoke, assume yourself, and dash his bold aspiring hopes; the deity of his desires is avarice; a heretic in love, and ought to be banish'd by the queen of beauty. See, Madam, a faithful servant kneels, and begs to be admitted in the number of your slaves.

[*Miranda gives him her hand to raise him.*]

Sir Fran. I wish I could hear what he says now. [*Running up.*] Hold, hold, hold, no palming, that's contrary to articles—

Sir Geo. 'Sdeath, Sir, keep your distance, or I'll write another article in your guts. [*Lays his hand to his sword.*]

Sir Fran. [*Going back.*] A bloody minded fellow!

Sir Geo. Not answer me! perhaps she thinks my address too grave: I'll be more free—Can you be so unconscionable, Madam, to let me say all these fine things to you without one single compliment in return? View me well; am I not a proper handsome fellow, ha! Can you prefer that old, dry, withered, senseless log of sixty-five, to the vigorous, gay, sprightly love of twenty-four? With snoring only he'll awake thee; but I, with ravishing de-

light, would make thy senses dance in concert with the joyful minutes.—Ha! not yet? sure she is dumb.—Thus would I steal and touch thy beauteous hand, [*Takes hold of her hand.*] till by degrees I reach'd thy snowy breasts, then ravish kisses thus.

[*Embraces her in ecstasy.*]

Miran. [*Struggles and flings from him.*] O heavens! I shall not be able to contain myself. [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. [*Running up with his watch in his hand.*] Sure she did not speak to him—There's five of the ten minutes gone, Sir George—Adod, I don't like those close conferences—

Sir Geo. More interruptions—you will have it, Sir! [*Lays his hand to his sword.*]

Sir Fran. [*Going back.*] No, no, you sha'n't have her neither.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Dumb still—Sure this old dog has enjoin'd her silence; I'll try another way—I must conclude, Madam, that in compliance to your guardian's humour, you refuse to answer me—Consider the injustice of his injunction, Madam: these ten minutes cost me a hundred pound—and would you answer me, I could purchase the whole day so. However, Madam, you must give me leave to make the best interpretation I can for my money, and take the indication of your silence for the secret liking of my person: therefore, Madam, I will instruct you how to keep your word inviolate to Sir Francis, and yet answer me to every question. As for example, when I ask any thing to which you would reply in the affirmative, gently nod your head—thus; and when in the negative, thus; [*Shaking his head.*] and in the doubtful, a tender sigh, thus.

[*Sighs.*]

Miran. How every action charms me—but I'll fit him for signs, I warrant him.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! poor Sir George; ha, ha, ha!

[*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Was it by his desire that you are dumb, Madam, to all that I can say?

Miran. [*Nods.*]

Sir Geo. Very well! she's tractable, I find—And is it possible that you can love him? [*Miran. nods.*] Miraculous! Pardon the bluntness of my questions, for my time is short. May I not hope to supplant him in your esteem? [*Miran. sighs.*] Good; she answers me as I could wish—You'll not consent to marry him then? [*Miran. sighs.*] How! doubtful in that?—Undone again—Humph! but that may proceed from his power to keep her out of her estate till twenty-five; I'll try that—Come, Madam, I cannot think you hesitate on this affair out of any motive but your fortune—Let him keep it till those few years are expired; make me happy with your person, let him enjoy your wealth—

[*Miran. holds up her hands.*] Why, what sign is that now? Nay, nay, Madam, except you observe my lesson, I can't understand your meaning.

Sir Fran. What a vengeance, are they talking by signs! 'ad I may be fool'd here—What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir Geo. To cut your throat, if you dare mutter another syllable.

Sir Fran. Od! I wish he were fairly out of my house.

Sir Geo. Pray, Madam, will you answer me to the purpose? [*Miran. shakes her head, and points to Sir Francis.*] What does she mean! she won't answer me to the purpose, or is she afraid yon old cuss should understand her signs?—Ay, it must be that. I perceive, Madam, you are too apprehensive of the promise you have made, to follow my rules; therefore I'll suppose your mind, and answer for you.—First, for myself, Madam, that I am in love

with you is an infallible truth. Now for you: [*Turns on her side.*] Indeed, Sir, and may I believe it?—As certainly, Madam, as that 'tis day-light, or that I die if you persist in silence—Bless me with the music of your voice, and raise my spirits to their proper heaven: thus low let me intreat, ere I'm oblig'd to quit this place, grant me some token of a favourable reception to keep my hopes alive. [*Arises hastily, turns on her side.*] Rise, Sir; and since my guardian's presence will not allow me privilege of tongue, read that, and rest assured you are not indifferent to me. [*Offers her a letter.*] Ha, right woman! But [*She strikes it down.*] no matter, I'll go on.

Sir Fran. Ha! what's that! a letter!—Ha, ha, ha! thou art baulk'd.

Miran. The best assurance I ever saw.— [*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Ha! a letter! Oh! let me kiss it with the same raptures that I would do the dear hand that touch'd it [*Opens it.*] Now for a quick fancy, and a long extempore—What's here? [*Reads.*] "Dear Sir George; this virgin muse I consecrate to you, which, when it has receiv'd the addition of your voice, will charm me to a desire of liberty to love, which you, and only you, can fix." My angel, Oh, you transport me! [*Kisses the letter.*] And see the power of your command; the god of love has set the verse already; the flowing numbers dance into a tune, and I'm inspir'd with a voice to sing it. Miran. I'm sure thou art inspir'd with impudence enough. [*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. [*Sings.*]

'Great love inspire him;

'Say I admire him.

'Give me the lover

'That can discover

'Secret devotion

'From silent motion;

'Then don't betray me,

'But hence convey me.

Sir Geo. [*Taking hold of Miranda.*] With all my heart, this moment let's retire. [*Sir Francis coming up hastily.*]

Sir Fran. The time is expir'd, Sir, and you must take your leave. There, my girl, there's the hundred pounds which thou hast won; go, I'll be with you presently; ha, ha, ha, ha! [*Exit Miranda.*]

Sir Geo. Ads heart, Madam, you won't leave me just in the nick, will you?

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! she has nick'd you, Sir George, I think; ha, ha, ha! Have you any more hundred pounds to throw away upon courtship? ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. He, he, he, he! A curse of your fleering jests—Yet, however ill I succeeded, I'll venture the same wager, she does not value thee a spoonful of snuff;—Nay, more, though you enjoin'd her silence to me, you'll never make her speak to the purpose with yourself.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! did not I tell thee thou would'st repent thy money? Did not I say, she hated young fellows? ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. And I'm positive she's not in love with age.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha! no matter for that; ha, ha! she's not taken with your youth, nor your rhetoric to boot; ha, ha!

Sir Geo. What'er her reasons are for disliking of me, I am certain she can be taken with nothing about thee.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! how he swells with envy!—poor man, poor man—ha, ha, ha! I must beg your pardon, Sir George; Miranda will be impatient to have her share of mirth: verily we shall laugh at thee most egregiously. Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. With all my heart, faith—I shall laugh in my turn too—For if you dare marry her, old Belzebub, you will be cuckolded most egregiously; remember that, and tremble—

'She that to age her beauteous self resigns,

'Shews witty management for close designs.

'Then if thou'rt grac'd with fair Miranda's bed,

'Ateon's horns she means shall crown thy head. [*Exit.*]

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! he is mad.

'These fluttering fops imagine they can wind,

'Turn, and decoy to love all women kind

'But here's a proof of wisdom in my charge,

'Old men are constant, young men live at large;

'The frugal band can bills at sight defray,

'When be that lavish is, has nought to pay.' [*Exit.*]

SCENE changes to Sir Jealous Traffick's House.

Enter Sir Jealous, and Isabinda; Patch following.

Sir Jea. What, in the balcony again! notwithstanding my positive commands to the contrary?—Why don't you write a bill on your forehead, to shew passengers there's something to be let?—

Isab. What harm can there be in a little fresh air, Sir?

Sir Jea. Is your constitution so hot, mistress, that it wants cooling, ha? Apply the virtuous Spanish rules, banish your taste, and thoughts of flesh, feed upon roots, and quench your thirst with water.

Isab. That and a close room would certainly make me die of the vapours.

Sir Jea. No, mistress, 'tis your high-fed, lusty, rambling, rampant ladies—that are troubled with the vapours: 'tis your ratafia, perfico, cinnamon, citron, and spirit of clary, cause such swi—m—ing in the brain, that carries many a guinea full-tide to the doctor. But you are not to be bred this way; no galloping abroad, no receiving visits at home; for in our loose country, the women are as dangerous as the men.

Patch. So I told her, Sir; and that it was not decent to be seen in a balcony—but she threatened to slap my chaps, and told me, I was her servant, not her governess.

Sir Jea. Did she so? but I'll make her know that you are her duenna: Oh, that incomparable custom of Spain! Why here's no depending upon old women in my country—for they are as wanton at eighty, as a girl of eighteen; and a man may as safely trust to Asgil's translation, as to his great-grandmother's not marrying again.

Isab. Or to the Spanish ladies veils and duennas, for the safeguard of their honour.

Sir Jea. Dare to ridicule the cautious conduct of that wise nation, and I'll have you lock'd up this fortnight without a peep-hole.

Isab. If we had but the ghostly helps in England, which they have in Spain, I might deceive you if you did—Sir, 'tis not the restraint, but the innate principles, secures the reputation and honour of our sex. Let me tell you, Sir, confinement sharpens the invention, as want of sight strengthens the other senses, and is often more pernicious than the recreation that innocent liberty allows.

Sir Jea. Say you so, mistress? who the devil taught you the art of reasoning? I assure you they must have a greater faith than I pretend to, that can think any woman innocent who requires liberty. Therefore, Patch, to your charge I give her; lock her up till I come back from 'Change: I shall have some sauntering coxcomb, with nothing but a red coat and a feather, think, by leaping into her arms, to leap into my estate—but I'll prevent them: she shall be only Signior Babinetto's.

Patch. Really, Sir, I wish you would employ any body else in this affair; I lead a life like a dog, with obeying your commands. Come, Madam, will you please to be locked up?

Isab. Ay, to enjoy more freedom than he is aware of. [*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. I believe this wench is very true to my interest: I am happy I met with her. If I can but keep my daughter from being blown upon till Signior Babinetto arrives, he shall marry her as soon as he comes, and carry her to Spain as soon as he has married her. She has a pregnant wit, and I'd no more have her an English wife, than the Grand Signior's mistress. [*Exit.*]

Enter Whisper.

Whisp. So, I saw Sir Jealous go out; where shall I find Mrs. Patch now?

Enter Patch.

Patch. Oh, Mr. Whisper! my lady saw you out at the window, and ordered me to bid you fly, and let your master know she's now alone.

Whisp. Hush, speak softly; I go, I go; But hark ye, Mrs. Patch; shall not you and I have a little confabulation, when my master and your lady are engag'd?

Patch. Ay, ay; farewell. [*Goes in and shuts the door.*]

Re-enter Sir Jealous Traffick, meeting Whisper.

Sir Jea. Sure, whilst I was talking with Mr. Tradewell, I heard my door clap. [*Seeing Whisper.*] Ha! a man lurking about my house: Who do you want there, Sir?

Whisp. Want—want, a pox, Sir Jealous! What must I say now?

Sir Jea. Ay, want; have you a letter or message, for any body there?—O' my conscience this is some he-bawd—

Whisp. Letter or message, Sir!

Sir Jea. Ay, letter or message, Sir.

Whisp. No, not I, Sir.

Sir Jea. Sirrah, sirrah, I'll have you set in the stocks, if you don't tell me your business immediately.

Whisp. Nay, Sir, my business—is no great matter of business, neither; and yet 'tis business of consequence, too.

Sir Jea. Sirrah, don't trifle with me.

Whisp. Trifle, Sir! have you found him, Sir?

Sir Jea. Found what, you rascal?

Whisp. Why Trifle is the very lap-dog my lady lost, Sir; I fancy I saw him run into this house. I'm glad you have him—Sir, my lady will be overjoy'd that I have found him.

Sir Jea. Who is your lady, friend?

Whisp. My Lady Love-Puppy, Sir.

Sir Jea. My Lady Love-Puppy, Sir! then pr'ythee carry thyself to her, for I know no other whelp that belongs to her; and let me catch you no more puppy-hunting about my doors, least I have you prest into the service, sirrah.

Whisp. By no means, Sir—Your humble servant; I must watch whether he goes, or no, before I can tell my master. [*Exit.*]

Sir Jea. This fellow has the officious leer of a pimp, and I half suspect a design; but I'll be upon them before they think on me, I warrant 'em.

SCENE, Charles's Lodgings.

Enter Charles and Marplot.

Cba. Honest Marplot, I thank thee for this supply. I expect my lawyer with a thousand pounds I have ordered him to take up, and then you shall be repaid.

Marp. Pho, pho, no more of that;—here comes Sir George Airy.

Enter Sir George.

Curfiedly out of humour at his disappointment; see how he looks! ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. Ah, Charles, I am so humbled in my pretensions to plots upon women, that I believe I shall never have courage enough to attempt a chamber-maid again.—I'll tell thee.

Cba. Ha, ha! I'll spare you the relation, by telling you—Impatient to know your business with my father, when I saw you enter, I slipped back into the next room, where I over-heard every syllable.

Sir Geo. That I said?—But I'll be hang'd if you heard her answer—But pr'ythee tell me, Charles, is she a fool?

Cba. I never suspected her for one; but Marplot can inform you better, if you'll allow him a judge.

Marp. A fool! I'll justify she has more wit than all the rest of her sex put together; why, she'll rally me till I can't one word to say for myself.

Cba. A mighty proof of her wit, truly—

Marp. There must be some trick in't, Sir George; egad I'll find it out, if it cost me the sum you paid for't

Sir Geo. Do, and command me—

Marp. Enough, let me alone to trace a secret—

Enter Whisper, and speaks aside to his Master.

The devil! Whisper here again! that fellow never speaks out. Is this the same, or a new secret?—Sir George, won't you ask Charles what news Whisper brings?

Sir Geo. Not I, Sir; I suppose it does not relate to me.

Marp. Lord, lord, how little curiosity some people have! Now my chief pleasure lies in knowing every body's business.

Sir Geo. I fancy, Charles, thou hast some engagement upon thy hands: I have a little business, too. Marplot, if it fall in your way to bring me any intelligence from Miranda, you'll find me at the Thatch'd House at six—

Marp. You do me much honour.

Cba. You guess right, Sir George; wish me success, Sir Geo. Better than attended me. Adieu. [*Exit.*]

Cba. Marplot, you must excuse me—

Marp. Nay, nay, what need of any excuse amongst friends? I'll go with you.

Cba. Indeed, you must not.

Marp. No! then I suppose 'tis a duel, and I will go to secure you.

Cba. Well, but it is no duel, consequently no danger. Therefore pr'ythee be answer'd.

Marp. What, is't a mistress then?—mum—you know I can be silent upon occasion.

Cba. I wish you could be civil too: I tell you, you neither must nor shall go with me. Farewell. [*Exit.*]

Marp. Why then—I must and will follow you. [*Exit.*]

ACT III. SCENE, a Street.

Enter Charles.

Cba. WELL, here's the house which holds the lovely prize quiet and serene: here no noisy footmen throng to tell the world, that beauty dwells within; no ceremonious visit makes the lover wait; no rival to give my heart a pang: who would not scale the window at midnight without fear of the jealous father's pistol, rather than fill up the train of a coquet, where every minute he is jostled out of place! [*Knocks softly.*] Mrs. Patch, Mrs. Patch!

Enter Patch.

Patch. Oh, are you come, Sir? All's safe.

Cba. Go in, in then.

Enter Marplot.

Marp. There he goes: who the devil lives here? except I can find out that, I am as far from knowing his business as ever; gad I'll watch, it may be a bawdy-house, and he may have his throat cut; if there should be any mischief, I can make oath he went in. Well, Charles, in spite of your endeavours to keep me out of the secret, I may save your life for aught I know. At that corner I'll plant myself, there I shall see whoever goes in, or comes out. 'Gad, I love discoveries. *[Exit.]*

SCENE draws. Charles, Isabinda, and Patch.

Isab. Patch, look out sharp; have a care of dad.

Patch. I warrant you.

Isab. Well, Sir, if I may judge your love by your courage, I ought to believe you sincere; for you venture into the lion's den when you come to see me.

Cba. If you'd consent, whilst the furious beast is abroad, I'd free you from the reach of his paw.

Isab. That would be but to avoid one danger by running into another: 'like poor wretches who fly the burning ship, and meet their fate in the water.' Come, come, Charles, I fear, if I consult my reason, confinement and plenty, is better than liberty and starving. I know you'd make the frolick pleasing for a little time, by saying and doing a world of tender things; but when our small substance is exhausted, and a thousand requisites for life are wanting; love, who rarely dwells with poverty, would also, fail us.

Cba. Faith, I fancy not; methinks my heart has laid up a stock will last for life; to back which, I have taken a thousand pounds upon my uncle's estate; that surely will support us till one of our fathers relent.

Isab. There's no trusting to that, my friend; I doubt your father will carry his humour to the grave, and mine till he sees me settled in Spain.

Cba. And can you then cruelly resolve to stay till that curs'd Don arrives, and suffer that youth, beauty, fire, and wit, to be sacrificed to the arms of a dull Spaniard, to be immur'd, and forbid the sight of any thing that's human?

Isab. No, when it comes to that extremity, and no stratagem can relieve us, thou shalt lift for a soldier, and I'll carry thy knapsack after thee.

Cba. Bravely resolv'd! the world cannot be more savage than our parents, and fortune generally afflicts the bold: therefore consent now: Why should we put it to a future hazard? Who knows when we shall have another opportunity!

Isab. Oh, you have your ladder of ropes, I suppose, and the closet window stands just where it did; and if you ha'n't forgot to write in characters, Patch will find a way for our assignations. Thus much of the Spanish contrivance my father's severity has taught me; I thank him: though I hate the nation, I admire their management in these affairs.

Enter Patch.

Patch. Oh, Madam, I see my master coming up the street.

Cba. Oh, the devil; would I had my ladder now! I thought you had not expected him till night: why, why, why, what shall I do, Madam?

Isab. Oh! for Heaven's sake I don't go that way, you'll meet him full in the teeth: 'Oh, unlucky moment!'

Cba. Adfheart, can you shut me into no cupboard, nor ram me into a chest, ha?

Patch. Impossible, Sir, he searches every hole in the house.

Isab. Undone for ever! if he sees you, I shall never see you more.

Pateb. I have thought on it: run you to your chamber, Madam; and, Sir, come you along with me: I'm certain you may easily get down from the balcony.

Cba. My life, adieu—Lead on, guide. *[Exit.]*

Isab. Heaven preserve him. *[Exit.]*

SCENE, changes to the Street.

Enter Sir Jealous, with Marplot behind him.

Sir Jea. I don't know what's the matter, I have a strong suspicion all is not right within; that fellow sauntering about my door, and his tale of a puppy had the face of a lye, methought. By St. Iago, if I should find a man in the house, I'd make murther of him—

Marp. Ah, poor Charles—ha? Egad he is old, —I fancy I might bully him, and make Charles have an opinion of my courage.

Sir Jea. My own key shall let me in; I'll give them no warning. *[Feeling for his key.]*

Marp. What's that you say, Sir?

[Going up to Sir Jealous.]

Sir Jea. What's that to you? *[Turns quick upon him.]*

Marp. Yes, 'tis to me, Sir: for the gentleman you threaten is a very honest gentleman. Look to't! for if he comes not as safe out of your house as he went in, I have half a dozen myrmidons hard by shall beat it about your ears,

Sir Jea. Went in! What, is he in then? Ah! a combination to undo me—I'll myrmidon you, ye dog, you—Thieves! thieves!

[Beats Marplot all the while he cries thieves.]

Marp. Murder, murder; I was not in your house, Sir.

Enter Servants.

Serv. What's the matter, Sir?

Sir Jea. The matter, rascal! You have let a man into my house; but I'll flea him alive; follow me, I'll not leave a mouse-hole unsearch'd. If I find him, by St. Iago, I'll equip him for the Opera.

Marp. A deuce of his cane, there's no trusting to age—What shall I do to relieve Charles? Egad, I'll raise the neighbourhood—Murder! murder!

[Charles drops down upon him from the balcony.] Charles, faith I'm glad to see thee safe out, with all my heart.

Cba. A pox of your bawling; how the devil came you here?

Marp. Here! 'gad, I have done you a piece of service; I told the old thunderbolt, that the gentleman that was gone in, was—

Cba. Was it you that told him, Sir? *[Laying bold of him.]* 'Sdeath, I could crush thee into atoms. *[Exit Charles.]*

Marp. What, will you choak me for my kindness?—Will my enquiring soul never leave searching into other people's affairs, till it gets squeez'd out of my body; I dare not follow him now for my blood, he's in such a passion—I'll to Miranda: if I can discover aught that may oblige Sir George, it may be a means to reconcile me again to Charles. *[Exit.]*

Enter Sir Jealous and his Servants.

Sir Jea. Are you sure you have search'd every where?

Serv. Yes, from the top of the house to the bottom.

Sir Jea. Under the beds and over the beds?

Serv. Yes, and in them too; but found nobody, Sir.

Sir Jea. Why, what could this rogue mean?

Enter Isabinda and Patch.

Patch. Take courage, Madam, I saw him safe out. *[Aside to Isab.]*

Isab. Bless me! what's the matter, Sir?

Sir Jea. You know best—Pray where's the man that was here just now?

Isab. What man, Sir? I saw none!

Patch. Nor I, by the trust you repose in me: do you think I would let a man come within these doors, when you are absent?

Sir Jea. Ah, Patch, she may be too cunning for thy honesty; the very scout, that he had set to give warning, discover'd it to me—and threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—but I think I maul'd the villain. These afflictions you draw upon me, mistress!

Isab. Pardon me, Sir, 'tis your own ridiculous humour draws you into these vexations, and gives every fool pretence to banter you.

Sir Jea. No, 'tis your idle conduct, your coquetish flirting into the balcony—Oh! with what joy shall I resign thee into the arms of Don Diego Babinetto?

Isab. And with what industry shall I avoid him?

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. Certainly that rogue had a message from somebody or other; but being baulk'd by my coming, pop'd that sham upon me. Come along, ye fots, let's see if we can find the dog again. Patch, lock her up; dy'e hear.

Patch. Yes, Sir—Ay, walk till your heels ache, you'll find nobody, I promise you.

Isab. Who cou'd that scout be which he talks of?

Patch. Nay, I can't imagine, without it was Whisfer.

Isab. Well, dear Patch, let's employ all our thoughts how to escape this horrid Don Diego; my very heart sinks at his terrible name.

Patch. Fear not, Madam, Don Carlos shall be the man, or I'll lose the reputation of contriving; and then what's a chamber-maid good for?

Isab. Say'st thou so, my girl? Then—

Let dad be jealous, multiply his cares,

Whilst love instructs me to avoid the snares;

I'll, spite of all his Spanish caution, show,

How much for love a British maid can do.

SCENE, Sir Francis Gripe's House.

Sir Francis and Miranda meeting.

Miran. Well, Gardee, how did I perform the dumb scene?

Sir Fran. To admiration—Thou dear little rogue—let me buss thee for it: nay, adod, I will, Chargee, so muzzle, and tuzzle, and hug thee; I will, 'faith, I will.

[*Hugging and kissing her.*]

Miran. Nay, Gardee, don't be so lavish; who would ride post, when the journey lasts for life?

Sir Fran. Ah, wag! ah, wag! I'll buss thee again, for that.

Miran. Faugh! how he stinks of tobacco! what a delicate bedfellow I should have!

[*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Oh, I am transported! When, when, my dear, wilt thou convince the world of the happy day? When shall we marry, ha?

Miran. There's nothing wanting but your consent, Sir Francis.

Sir Fran. My consent! What does my charmer mean?

Miran. Nay, 'tis only a whim: but I'll have every thing according to form—Therefore, when you sign an authentic paper, drawn up by an able lawyer, that I have your leave to marry, the next day makes me yours, Gardee.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! a whim indeed! why is it not demonstration I give my leave, when I marry thee?

Miran. Not for your reputation, Gardee; the ma-

licious world will be apt to say you trick'd me into marriage, and so take the merit from my choice. Now I will have the act my own, to let the idle fops see how much I prefer a man loaded with years and wisdom.

Sir Fran. Humph! Pr'ythee leave out years, Chargee. I'm not so old, as thou shalt find: adod, I'm young; there's a caper for ye.

[*Jumps.*]

Miran. Oh, never excuse it; why, I like you the better for being old—but I shall suspect you don't love me, if you refuse me this formality.

Sir Fran. Not love thee, Chargee: Adod, I do love thee better than, than, than, better than—what shall I say? Egad, better than money; 'faith I do—

Miran. That's false, I'm sure. [*Aside.*] To prove it, do this, then.

Sir Fran. Well, I will do it, Chargee, provided I bring a licence at the same time?

Miran. Ay, and a parson too; if you please. Ha, ha, ha! I cannot help laughing, to think how all the young coxcombs about town will be mortified when they hear of our marriage.

Sir Fran. So they will, so they will; ha, ha, ha!

Miran. Well, I fancy I shall be so nappy with my Gardee—

Sir Fran. If wearing pearls and jewels, or eating gold, as the old saying is, can make thee happy, thou shalt be so, my sweetest, my lovely, my charming, my—verily I know not what to call thee.

Miran. You must know, Gardee, that I am so eager to have this business concluded, that I have employed my woman's brother, who is a lawyer in the Temple, to settle matters just to your liking; you are to give your consent to my marriage, which is to yourself, you know: but mum, you must take no notice of that. So then I will, that is, with your leave, put my writings into his hands; then tomorrow, we come slap upon them with a wedding that nobody thought on; by which you seize me and my estate, and, I suppose, make a bonfire of your own act and deed.

Sir Fran. Nay, but, Chargee, if—

Miran. Nay, Gardee, no ifs—Have I refus'd three northern lords, two British peers, and half a score knights, to have you put in your ifs—

Sir Fran. So thou hast, indeed, and I will trust to thy management. Od, I'm all of a fire.

Miran. 'Tis a wonder the dry stubble does not blaze.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Marplot.

Sir Fran. How now, who sent for you, Sir? What's the hundred pound gone already?

Marp. No, Sir, I don't want money now.

Sir Fran. No; that's a miracle! but there's one thing you want, I'm sure.

Marp. Ay, what's that, Guardian?

Sir Fran. Manners. What, had I no servants without?

Marp. None that could do my business, Guardian, which is at present with this lady.

Miran. With me, Mr. Marplot! what is it, I beseech you?

Sir Fran. Ay, Sir, what is it? Any thing that relates to her may be deliver'd to me.

Marp. I deny that.

Miran. That's more than I do, Sir.

Marp. Indeed, Madam! Why then to proceed; same says, that you and my most conscionable Guardian here, design'd, contriv'd, plotted, and agreed, to chouse a very civil, honest, honourable gentleman, out of a hundred pounds.

Miran. That I contriv'd it!

Marp. Ay, you—You said never a word against it, so far you are guilty.

Sir Fran. Pray tell that civil, honest, honourable gentleman, that if he has any more such fums to fool away, they shall be received like the last; ha, ha, ha! chous'd, quotha! But hark ye, let him know, at the same time, that if he dare to report I trick'd him of it, I shall recommend a lawyer to him shall shew him a trick for twice as much; d'ye hear? tell him that.

Marp. So, and this is the way you use a gentleman, and my friend?

Miran. Is the wretch thy friend?

Marp. The wretch! Look ye, Madam, don't call names; egad, I won't take it.

Miran. Why, you won't beat me, will you? ha, ha!

Marp. I don't know whether I will or no.

Sir Fran. Sir, I shall make a servant shew you out at the window, if you are saucy.

Marp. I am your most humble servant, Guardian; I design to go out the same way I came in. I would only ask this lady, if she does not think in her soul Sir George Airy is a fine gentleman?

Miran. He dresses well.

Sir Fran. Which is chiefly owing to his taylor and valet-de-chambre.

Miran. And if you allow that a proof of his being a fine gentleman, he is so.

Marp. The judicious part of the world allow him wit, courage, gallantry, and management; though I think he forfeited that character, when he flung away a hundred pounds upon your dumb ladyship.

Sir Fran. Does that gaul him? ha, ha, ha!

Miran. So Sir George, remaining in deep discontent, has sent you, his trusty 'squire, to utter his complaint: Ha, ha, ha!

Marp. Yes, Madam; and you, like a cruel, hard-hearted Jew, value it no more—than I would your ladyship, were I Sir George, you, you, you!

Miran. Oh, don't call names: I know you love to be employ'd, and I'll oblige you, and you shall carry him a message from me.

Marp. According as I like it; what is it?

Miran. Nay, a kind one, you may be sure—First tell him, I have chose this gentleman to have and to hold, and so forth. [*Clapping her hand into Sir Francis's.*]

Sir Fran. Oh, the dear rogue, how I doat on her! [*Aside.*]

Miran. And advise his impertinence to trouble me no more; for I prefer Sir Francis for a husband before all the fops in the universe.

Marp. O Lord, O Lord! she's bewitch'd, that's certain; here's a husband for eighteen—Here's a shape—Here's bones rattling in a leathers bag. [*Turning Sir Francis about.*] Here's buckram and canvas to scrub you to repentance.

Sir Fran. Sirrah, my cane shall teach you repentance presently.

Marp. No, faith, I have felt it's twin-brother from just such a wither'd hand too lately.

Miran. One thing more: advise him to keep from the garden-gate on the left-hand; for if he dare to saunter there about the hour of eight, as he used to do, he shall be saluted with a pistol or a blunderbuss.

Sir Fran. Oh, monstrous! why, Chargee, did he use to come to the garden-gate?

Miran. The gard'ner describ'd just such another man that always watch'd his coming out, and fain would have brib'd him for his entrance—Tell him he shall find a warm reception if he comes this night.

Marp. Pistols and blunderbusses! Egad, a warm reception indeed; I shall take care to inform him of your kindness, and advise him to keep farther off.

Miran. I hope he will understand my meaning better, than to follow your advice. [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. Thou hast sign'd, seal'd, and ta'en possession of my heart for ever, Chargee; ha, ha, ha! and for you, Mr. Sauce-box, let me have no more of your messages, if ever you design to inherit your estate, gentleman.

Marp. Why there 'tis now. Sure I shall be out of your clutches one day—Well, Guardian, I say no more; but if you be not as arrant a cuckold as e'er drove bargain upon the Exchange, or paid attendance to a court, I am the son of a whetstone; and so your humble servant. [*Exit.*]

Miran. Don't forget the message; ha, ha, ha!

Sir Fran. I am so provok'd—'tis well he's gone.

Miran. Oh, mind him not, Gardee; but let's sign articles, and then—

Sir Fran. And then—Adod, I believe I am metamorphos'd; my pulse beats high, and my blood boils, methinks— [*Kissing and bugging her.*]

Miran. O fie, Gardee, be not so violent; consider the market lasts all the year—Well; I'll in and see if the lawyer he come; you'll follow? [*Exit.*]

Sir Fran. Ay, to the world's end, my dear. Well, Frank, thou art a lucky fellow in thy old age, to have such a delicate morsel, and thirty thousand pounds in love with thee; I shall be the envy of batchelors, the glory of marry'd men, and the wonder of the town. Some guardians would be glad to compound for part of the estate, at dispatching an heiress; but I engross the whole: *O! mibi præteritos refero si Jupiter annos.* [*Exit.*]

SCENE changes to a Tavern; discovers Sir George and Charles with Wine before them, and Whisper waiting.

Sir Geo. Nay, pr'ythee don't be grave, Charles; misfortunes will happen; ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort to have a companion in our sufferings.

Cba. I am only apprehensive for Isabinda; her father's humour is implacable; and how far his jealousy may transport him to her undoing, shocks my soul to think.

Sir Geo. But since you escap'd undiscover'd by him, his rage will quickly lash into a calm, never fear it.

Cba. But who knows what that unlucky dog Marplot told him? nor can I imagine what brought him hither; that fellow is ever doing mischief; and yet, to give him his due, he never designs it. This is some blundering adventure, wherein he thought to shew his friendship, as he calls it; a curse on him!

Sir Geo. Then you must forgive him; what said he?

Cba. Said; nay, I had more mind to cut his throat, than to hear his excuses.

Sir Geo. Where is he?

Whisp. Sir, I saw him go into Sir Francis Gripe's just now.

Cba. Oh! then he's upon your business, Sir George; a thousand to one but he makes some mistake there too.

Sir Geo. Impossible, without he huffs the lady, and makes love to Sir Francis.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Mr. Marplot is below, gentlemen, and desires to know if he may have leave to wait upon ye.

Cba. How civil the rogue is when he has done a fault!

Sir Geo. Ho! desire him to walk up. Pr'ythee, Charles, throw off this chagrin, and be good company.

Cba. Nay, hang him, I'm not angry with him. Whisper, fetch me pen, ink, and paper.

Whisp. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit Whisp.*]

Enter Marplot.

Cha. Do but mark his sheepish look, Sir George.

Marp. Dear Charles, don't o'erwhelm a man—already under unsupportable affliction. I'm sure I always intend to serve my friends; but if my malicious stars deny the happiness, is the fault mine?

Sir Geo. Never mind him, Mr. Marplot; he is eat up with spleen. But tell me, what says Miranda?

Marp. Says—nay, we are all undone there too.

Cha. I told you so; nothing prospers that he undertakes.

Marp. Why, can I help her having chose your father for better for worse?

Cha. So; there's another of fortune's strokes. I suppose I shall be edg'd out of my estate with twins every year, let who will get 'em.

Sir Geo. What is the woman really possess'd?

Marp. Yes, with the spirit of contradiction; she rail'd at you most prodigiously.

Sir Geo. That's no ill sign.

Enter Whisper, with pen, ink, and paper.

Marp. You'd say it was no good sign, if you knew all.

Sir Geo. Why, pr'ythee?

Marp. Hark'e, Sir George; let me warn you, pursue your old haunt no more, it may be dangerous. [*Charles sits down to write.*]

Sir Geo. My old haunt! what do you mean?

Marp. Why, in short, then, since you will have it, Miranda vows if you dare approach the garden-gate at eight o'clock, as you us'd, you shall be saluted with a blunderbuss, Sir. These were her very words; nay she bid me tell you so too.

Sir Geo. Ha! the garden-gate at eight, as I us'd to do! there must be a meaning in this. Is there such a gate, Charles?

Cha. Yes, yes; it opens into the Park; I suppose her ladyship has made many a scamper through it.

Sir Geo. It must be an assignation, then. Ha, my heart springs for joy; 'tis a propitious omen. My dear Marplot, let me embrace thee, thou art my friend, my better angel!

Marp. What do you mean, Sir George?

Sir Geo. No matter what I mean. Here, take a bumper to the garden-gate, you dear rogue, you.

Marp. You have reason to be transported, Sir George; I have sav'd your life.

Sir Geo. My life! thou hast sav'd my soul, man! Charles, if thou dost not pledge this health, may'st thou never taste the joys of love.

Cha. Whisper, be sure you take care how you deliver this; [*Gives him the letter.*] bring me the answer to my lodgings.

Whisp. I warrant you, Sir.

Marp. Whither does that letter go!—Now I dare not ask for my blood.

Cha. Now I'm for you.

Sir Geo. To the garden-gate at the hour of eight, Charles; along, huzza!

Cha. I begin to conceive you.

Marp. That's more than I do, egad—to the garden-gate, huzza. [*Drinks.*] But I hope you design to keep far enough off on't, Sir George.

Sir Geo. Ay, ay, never fear that; she shall see I despise her frowns; let her use her blunderbuss against the next fool, she shan't reach me with the smoke, I warrant her; ha, ha, ha!

Marp. Ah, Charles, if you could receive a disappointment thus *en cavalier*, one should have some comfort in being beat for you.

Cha. The fool comprehends nothing.

Sir Geo. Nor would I have him: pr'ythee take him along with thee.

Cha. Enough—Marplot, you shall go home with me.

Marp. I'm glad I'm well with him, however.—Sir George, yours.—Egad, Charles asking me to go home with him, gives me a shrewd suspicion there's more in the garden-gate than I comprehend. Faith I'll give him the drop, and away to Guardian's, and find it out.

Sir Geo. I kiss both your hands.—And now for the garden-gate.

It's beauty gives the assignation there,

And love too powerful grows t' admit of fear. [*Exit.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE, *the Outside of Sir Jealous Traffick's House, Patch peeping out of the Door.*

Enter Whisper.

Whisp. **H**A, Mrs. Patch, this is a lucky minute, to find you so readily; my master dies with impatience.

Patch. My lady imagin'd so; and, by her orders, I have been scouting this hour in searching you, to inform you that Sir Jealous has invited some friends to supper with him to-night, which gives an opportunity to your master to make use of his ladder of ropes: the closet-window shall be open, and Isabinda ready to receive him: bid him come immediately.

Whisp. Excellent! he'll not disappoint, I warrant him.—But hold, I have a letter here, which I'm to carry an answer to, I can't think what language the direction is.

Patch. Pho, 'tis no language, but a character which the lovers invented to avert discovery—Ha, I hear my old master coming down stairs; it is impossible you should have an answer; away, and bid him come himself for that: be gone, we are ruin'd if you're seen, for he has doubled his care since the last accident.

Whisp. I go, I go. [*Exit.*]

Patch. There, go thou into my pocket. [*Puts it beside, and it falls down.*] Now, I'll up the back stairs, lest I meet him.—Well, a dextrous chamber-maid is the ladies best utensil, I say. [*Exit.*]

Enter Sir Jealous, with a letter in his hand.

Sir Jea. So, this is some comfort: this tells me that Signior Don Diego Babinetto is safely arriv'd; he shall marry my daughter the minute he comes—Ha, ha! what's here? [*Takes up the letter Patch drop'd.*] A letter! I don't know what to make of the superscription. I'll see what's within-side!—*[Opens it.]*—humph—'tis Hebrew, I think. What can this mean!—There must be some trick in it;—this was certainly design'd for my daughter; but I don't know that she can speak any language but her mother-tongue.—No matter for that; this may be one of love's hieroglyphicks; and I fancy I saw Patch's rail sweep by: that wench may be a slut; and, instead of guarding my honour, betray it. I'll find it out, I'm resolv'd.—Who's there?

Enter Servant.

What answer did you bring from the gentlemen I sent you to invite?

Serv. That they'd all wait of you, Sir, as I told you before; but I suppose you forgot, Sir.

Sir Jea. Did I so, Sir? But I shan't forget to break your head, if any of them come, Sir.

Serv. Come, Sir! why did not you send me to desire their company, Sir?

Sir Jea. But I send you now to desire their ap-

sence: say I have something extraordinary fallen out, which calls me abroad contrary to expectation, and ask their pardon; and, d'ye hear? send the butler to me.

Serv. Yes, Sir.

[Exit.

Sir Jea. If this paper has a meaning, I'll find it.—Lay the cloth in my daughter's chamber, and bid the cook send supper thither presently.

Butl. Yes, Sir.—Hey-day, what's the matter now? [Exit.

Sir Jea. He wants the eyes of Argus, that has a young handsome daughter in this town; but my comfort is, I shall not be troubled long with her. He that pretends to rule a girl once in her teens, had better be at sea in a storm, and would be in less danger;

For let him do or counsel all he can,

Sherbinks and dreams of nothing else but man. [Exit.

SCENE, *Isabinda's Chamber.*

Isabinda and Patch.

Isab. Are you sure nobody saw you speak to Whisperm?

Patch. Yes, very sure, Madam: but I heard Sir Jealous coming down stairs, so clapt his letter into my pocket. [Feels for the letter.

Isab. A letter! Give it me quickly.

Patch. Bless me! what's become on't—I'm sure I put it— [Searching still.

Isab. Is it possible thou could'st be so careless!—Oh! I'm undone for ever, if it be lost.

Patch. I must have dropt it upon the stairs. But why are you so much alarm'd? If the worst happens, nobody can read it, Madam, nor find out whom it was design'd for.

Isab. If it falls into my father's hands, the very figure of a letter will produce ill consequences. Run and look for it upon the stairs this moment.

Patch. Nay, I'm sure it can be no where else. [As she is going out of the door, meets the Butler.] How now, what do you want?

Butl. My master ordered me to lay the cloth here for his supper.

Isab. Ruin'd, past redemption— [Aside.

Patch. You mistake, sure; what shall we do?

Isab. I thought he expected company to-night—Oh! poor Charles! Oh! unfortunate Isabinda!

Butl. I thought so too, Madam, but I suppose he has altered his mind. [Lays the cloth, and exit.

Isab. The letter is the cause; this heedless action has undone me: fly and fasten the closet-window, which will give Charles notice to retire. Ha, my father! Oh, confusion!

Enter Sir Jealous.

Sir Jea. Hold, hold, Patch, whither are you going? I'll have nobody stir out of the room till after supper.

Patch. Sir, I was going to reach your easy-chair.—Oh, wretched accident!

Sir Jea. I'll have nobody stir out of the room. I don't want my easy-chair.

Isab. What will be the event of this? [Aside.

Sir Jea. Hark ye, daughter; do you know this hand?

Isab. As I suspected—Hand do you call't, Sir? 'Tis some school-boy's scrawl.

Patch. Oh invention! thou chamber-maid's best friend, assist me.

Sir Jea. Are you sure you don't understand it?

[Patch feels in her bosom, and shakes her coats.

Isab. Do you understand it, Sir?

Sir Jea. I wish I did.

Isab. Thank Heaven you do not. [Aside.] Then I know no more of it than you do, indeed, Sir.

Patch. O Lord! O Lord! what have you done, Sir? Why the paper is mine, I dropt it out of my bosom. [Snatching it from him.

Sir Jea. Ha! your's, mistress?

Isab. What does she mean by owning it? [Aside.

Patch. Yes, Sir, it is.

Sir Jea. What is it? speak!

Patch. Yes, Sir, it is a charm for the tooth-ach, —I have worn it these seven years; 'twas given me by an angel for aught I know, when I was raving with the pain; for nobody knew from whence he came, nor whither he went: He charg'd me never to open it, lest some dire vengeance befall me, and Heaven knows what will be the event. Oh! cruel misfortune, that I should drop it, and you should open it—If you had not open'd it—

Isab. Excellent wench! [Aside.

Sir Jea. Pox of your charms and whims for me; if that be all, 'tis well enough. There, there, burn it; and I warrant you no vengeance will follow.

Patch. So, all's right again thus far. [Aside.

Isab. I would not lose Patch for the world—I'll take courage a little. [Aside.] Is this usage for your daughter, Sir? Must my virtue and conduct be suspected for every trifle? You immure me like some dire offender here, and deny me all the recreations which my sex enjoy, and the custom of the country 'and modesty' allow; yet not content with that, you make my confinement more intolerable by your mistrusts and jealousies. Wou'd I were dead, so I were free from this!

Sir Jea. To-morrow rids you of this tiresome load; Don Diego Babinetto will be here, and then my care ends, and his begins.

Isab. Is he come, then?—Oh, how shall I avoid this hated marriage? [Aside.

Enter Servants with Supper.

Sir Jea. Come, will you sit down?

Isab. I can't eat, Sir.

Patch. No, I dare swear he has given her supper enough. I wish I could get into the closet. [Aside.

Sir Jea. Well, if you can't eat, then give me a song whilst I do.

Isab. I have such a cold I can scarce speak, Sir, much less sing.—How shall I prevent Charles coming in? [Aside.

Sir Jea. I hope you have the use of your fingers, Madam. Play a tune upon your spinnet, whilst your woman sings me a song.

Patch. I'm as much out of tune as my lady, if he knew all. [Aside.

Isab. I shall make excellent music.

[Sits down to play.

Patch. Really, Sir, I am so frightened about your opening this charm, that I can't remember one song.

Sir Jea. Pish, hang your charm; come, come, sing any thing.

Patch. Yes, I'm likely to sing, truly. [Aside.] Humph, humph; bless me, I cannot raise my voice, my heart pants so.

Sir Jea. Why, what does your heart pant so that you can't play neither? Pray what key are you in, ha?

Patch. Ah, wou'd the key was turn'd on you once. [Aside.

Sir Jea. Why don't you sing, I say?

Patch. When Madam has put her spinnet in tune, Sir. Humph; humph—

Isab. I can't play, Sir, whatever ails me. [Rising.

Sir Jea. Zounds, sit down, and play me a tune, or I'll break the spinnet about your ears.

Isab. What will become of me? [Sits down and plays.

Sir Jea. Come, mistress. [To Patch.

Patch. Yes, Sir. [*Sings, but horribly out of tune.*]

Sir Jea. Hey, hey, why you are a-top of the house, and you are down in the cellar. What is the meaning of this? Is it on purpose to cross me, ha?

Patch. Pray, Madam, take it a little lower, I cannot reach that note—Nor any note, I fear.

Isab. Well, begin——Oh! Patch, we shall be discover'd.

Patch. I sink with the apprehension, Madam—Humph, humph——[*Sings.*]

[*Charles opens the closet-door.*]

Cha. Music and fingering.

'Tis thus the bright celestial court above

Beguiles the hours with music and with love.

Death! her father these; [*The women shriek.*] then I must fly——[*Exit into the closet.*—*Sir Jealous rises up hastily, seeing Charles slip back into the closet.*]

Sir Jea. Hell and furies, a man in the closet!

Patch. Ah! a ghost, a ghost!—he must not enter the closet——[*Isabinda throws herself down before the closet-door, as in a swoon.*]

Sir Jea. The devil! I'll make a ghost of him, I warrant you. [*Strives to get by.*]

Patch. Oh, hold, Sir, have a care, you'll tread upon my lady—Who waits there? Bring some water. Oh! this comes of your opening the charm: Oh, oh, oh, oh! [*Weeps aloud.*]

Sir Jea. I'll charm you, housewife, here lies the charm that conjur'd this fellow in, I'm sure on't—come out, you rascal, do so—Zounds, take her from the door, or I'll spurn her from it, and break your neck down stairs.

Isab. Oh, oh! where am I?—He's gone, I heard him leap down. [*Aside to Patch.*]

Patch. Nay, then let him enter——here, here, Madam, smell to this; come, give me your hand; come nearer to the window, the air will do you good.

Sir Jea. I wou'd she were in her grave. Where are you, sirrah? Villain, robber of my honour! I'll pull you out of your nest. [*Goes into the closet.*]

Patch. You'll be mistaken, old gentleman, the bird is flown.

Isab. I'm glad I have escap'd so well. I was almost dead in earnest with the fright.

Re-enter Sir Jealous out of the closet.

Sir Jea. Whoever the dog were, he has escap'd out of the window, for the fash is up. But though he's got out of my reach, you are not. And first, Mrs. Pander, with your charms for the tooth-ach, get out of my house, go, troop; yet hold, stay, I'll see you out of my doors myself, but I'll secure your charge ere I go.

Isab. What do you mean, Sir? Was she not a creature of your own providing!

Sir Jea. She was of the devil's providing, for aught I know.

Patch. What have I done, Sir, to merit your displeasure?

Sir Jea. I don't know which of you have done it; but you shall both suffer for it, till I can discover whose guilt it is. Go, get in there: I'll move you from this side of the house. [*Pushes Isabinda in at the door, and locks it; puts the key in his pocket.*] I'll keep the key myself; I'll try what ghost will get into that room. And now, forsooth, I'll wait on you down stairs.

Patch. Ah, my poor lady—Down stairs, Sir! But I won't go out, Sir, till I have look'd up my clothes.

Sir Jea. If thou wert as naked as thou wert born, thou should'st not stay to put on a smock. Come along, I say; when your mistress is married, you shall have your rags, and every thing that belongs to you;

but till then——

[*Exit, pulling her out.*]

Patch. Oh! barbarous usage, for nothing!

Re-enter at the lower end.

Sir Jea. There, go, and come no more within sight of my habitation, these three days, I charge you. [*Slaps the door after her.*]

Patch. Did ever any body see such an old monster?

Enter Charles.

—Oh! Mr. Charles, your affairs and mine are in an ill posture.

Cha. I am inur'd to the frowns of fortune: But what has befallen thee?

Patch. Sir Jealous, whose suspicious nature's always on the watch; nay, even while one eye sleeps, the other keeps centinel; upon sight of you, flew into such a violent passion, that I could find no stratagem to appease him; but in spite of all arguments, lock'd his daughter into his own apartment, and turn'd me out of doors.

Cha. Ha! O Isabinda!

Patch. And swears she shall neither see sun nor moon, till she is Don Diego Babinetto's wife, who arrived last night, and is expected with impatience.

Cha. He dies; yes, by all the wrongs of love he shall: here will I plant myself, and through my breast he shall make his passage if he enters.

Patch. A most heroic resolution! There might be ways found out more to your advantage. Policy is often preferred to open force.

Cha. I apprehend you not.

Patch. What think you of personating this Spaniard, imposing upon the father, and marrying your mistress by his own consent?

Cha. Say'st thou so, my angel! Oh, cou'd that be done, my life to come wou'd be too short to recompence thee! But how can I do that, when I neither know what ship he came in, nor from what part of Spain; who recommends him, or how attended?

Patch. I can solve all this. He is from Madrid, his father's name Don Pedro Questo Portento Babinetto. Here's a letter of his to Sir Jealous, which he dropt one day! You understand Spanish, and the hand may be counterfeited. You conceive me, Sir?

Cha. My better genius, thou hast reviv'd my drooping soul! I'll about it instantly. Come to my lodgings, and we'll concert matters. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, a Garden-Gate open, Scentwell waiting within.

Enter Sir George Airy.

Sir Geo. So this is the gate, and most invitingly open: If there should be a blunderbuss here now, what a dreadful ditty would my fall make for fools! and what a jest for the wits! how my name would be roar'd about the streets! Well, I'll venture all.

Scentw. Hiss, hiss! Sir George Airy——[*Enters.*]

Sir Geo. A female voice! Thus far I'm safe.—My dear.

Scent. No, I'm not your dear; but I'll conduct you to her; give me your hand; you must go thro' many a dark passage and dirty step before you arrive——

Sir Geo. I know I must, before I arrive at paradise; therefore be quick, my charming guide.

Scentw. For aught you know; come, come, your hand, and away.

Sir Geo. Here, here, child, you can't be half so swift as my desires. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, the House.

Enter Miranda.

Miran. Well, let me reason a little with my mad self. Now don't I transgress all rules, to venture upon a man without the advice of the grave and wife? But then a rigid knavish Guardian, who would

have marry'd me! To whom? even to his nauseous self, or nobody. Sir George is what I have try'd in conversation, enquir'd into his character, and am satisfied in both. Then his love! Who would have given a hundred pounds only to have seen a woman he had not infinitely lov'd! So I find my liking him has furnish'd me with arguments enough of his side; and now the only doubt remains, whether he will come or no.

Enter Scentwell.

Scentw. That's resolv'd, Madam; for here's the knight.

[Exit Scentw.]

Sir Geo. And do I once more behold that lovely object, whose idea fills my mind, and forms my pleasing dreams!

Miran. What, beginning again in heroics!—*Sir George*, don't you remember how little fruit your last prodigal oration produc'd? not one bare single word in answer.

Sir Geo. Ha! the voice of my Incognita!—Why did you take ten thousand ways to captivate a heart your eyes alone had vanquish'd?

Miran. 'Pr'ythee,' no more of these flights; 'for our time's but short, and we must fall to business!' Do you think we can agree on that same terrible bugbear, matrimony, without heartily repenting on both sides?

Sir Geo. It has been my wish since first my longing eyes beheld you.

Miran. And your happy ears drank in the 'pleasing news, I had thirty thousand pounds.

Sir Geo. Unkind! Did not I offer you in those 'purchas'd minutes to run the risque of your fortune so you would but secure that lovely person to my arms?

Miran. Well, if you have such love and tenderness (since our wooing has been short) pray reserve it for our future days, to let the world see we are 'lovers after wedlock: 'twill be a novelty——'

Sir Geo. Haste; then, and let us tie the knot, and prove the envy'd pair——

Miran. Hold! not so fast! I have provided better than to venture on dangerous experiments headlong——My Guardian, trusting to my dissembled love, has given up my fortune to my own disposal: but with this proviso, that he to-morrow morning weds me. He is now gone to Doctors Commons for a licence.

Sir Geo. Ha! a licence!

Miran. But I have planted emissaries that will infallibly take him down to Epfom, under pretence that a brother usurer of his is to make him his executor: the thing on earth he covets.

Sir Geo. 'Tis his known character.

Miran. Now my instruments confirm him this man is dying, and he sends me word he goes this minute; it must be to-morrow ere he can be undecieved. That time is ours.

Sir Geo. Let us improve it, then, and settle on our coming years, endless, endless happiness!

Miran. I dare not stir till I hear he's on the road;—then I, and my writings, the most material point, are soon remov'd.

Sir Geo. I have one favour to ask, if it lies in your power; you wou'd be a friend to poor Charles, tho' the son of this tenacious man: he is as free from all his vices as nature and good education can make him; and, what now I have vanity enough to hope will induce you, he is the man on earth I love.

Miran. I never was his enemy, and only put it on, as it help'd my designs on his father. If his uncle's estate ought to be in his possession, which

I shrewdly suspect, I may do him a singular piece of service.

Sir Geo. You are all goodness.

Enter Scentwell.

Scentw. O Madam! my master and Mr. Marplot are just coming into the house.

Miran. Undone, undone! if he finds you here in this crisis, all my plots are unravell'd.

Sir Geo. What shall I do? can't I get back into the garden?

Scentw. Oh, no! he comes up those stairs.

Miran. Here, here, here! can you condescend to stand behind this chimney-board, Sir George?

Sir Geo. Any where, any where, dear Madam; without ceremony.

Scentw. Come, come, Sir; lie close——

[They put him behind the chimney-board.]

Enter Sir Francis and Marplot; Sir Francis peeling an Orange.

Sir Fran. I could not go, though 'tis upon life and death, without taking leave of dear Chargee. Besides, this fellow buzz'd into my ears, that thou might'st be so desperate as to shoot that wild rake which haunts the garden-gate; and that would bring us into trouble, dear——

Miran. So Marplot brought you back, then; I am oblig'd to him for that, I'm sure.

[Frowning at Marplot aside.]

Marp. By her looks, she means she is not oblig'd to me. I have done some mischief now; but what, I can't imagine.

Sir Fran. Well, Chargee, I have had three messengers to come to Epfom, to my neighbour Squeezum's, who, for all his vast riches, is departing.

[Sighs.]

Marp. Ay, see what all you usurers must come to!

Sir Fran. Peace, you young knave! Some forty years hence I may think on't——But, Chargee, I'll be with thee to-morrow, before those pretty eyes are open; I will, I will, Chargee; I'll rouse you, i'faith:—Here, Mrs. Scentwell, lift up your lady's chimney-board, that I may throw my peel in, and not litter her chamber

Miran. O my stars! what will become of us now?

[Aside.]

Scentw. Oh, pray, Sir, give it me: I love it above all things in nature; indeed I do.

Sir Fran. No, no, hussy; you have the green-pip already; I'll have no apothecary's bills.

[Goes towards the chimney.]

Miran. Hold, hold, hold, dear Gardee, I have a, a, a, a, a, a, monkey, shut up there; and if you open it before the man comes that is to tame it, 'tis so wild, 'twill break all my china, or get away, and that would break my heart; for I'm fond on't to distraction, next thee, dear Gardee.

[In a flattering tone.]

Sir Fran. Well, well, Chargee, I won't open it; she shall have her monkey, poor rogue. Here, throw this peel out of window.

[Exit Scentwell.]

Marp. A monkey, dear Madam, let me see it: I can tame a monkey as well as the best of them all. Oh! how I love the little miniatures of man!

Miran. Be quiet, Mischief, and stand farther from the chimney——You shall not see my monkey——

Why sure——

[Striving with him.]

Marp. For heav'n's sake, dear Madam, let me but peep, to see if it be as pretty as my lady Fiddle Faddle's. Has it got a chain?

Miran. Not yet; but I design it one shall last it's life-time; nay, you shall not see it——Look, Gardee, how he teizes me!

Sir Fran. [Getting between him and the chimney.] Sirrah, Sirrah, let my Chargee's monkey alone, or Bamboo shall fly about your ears. What! is there no dealing with you?

Marp. Pugh, pox of the monkey! here's a rout: I wish he may rival you.

Enter a Servant.

Serv. Sir, they have put two more horses in the coach, as you order'd, and 'tis ready at the door.

Sir Fran. Well, I am going to be executor; better for thee, Jewel. B'ye, Chargee, one buss!—I'm glad thou hast got a monkey to divert thee a little.

Miran. Thank'e, dear Gardee——Nay, I'll fee you to the coach.

Sir Fran. That's kind, adod.

Miran. Come along, impertinence. [To Marp.]

Marp. [Stepping back.] Egad, I will see the monkey now. [Lifts up the board, and discovers Sir George,] O Lord! O Lord! thieves! thieves! murder!

Sir Geo. Dam'ye, you unlucky dog! 'tis I: which way shall I get out? shew me instantly, or I'll cut your throat.

Marp. Undone, undone! at that door there. But hold, hold, break that china, and I'll bring you off.

[He runs off at the corner, and throws down some china.]

Re-enter Sir Francis, Miranda, and Scentwell.

Sir Fran. Mercy on me! what's the matter?

Miran. Oh, you toad! what have you done?

Marp. No great harm; I beg of you to forgive me. Longing to see the monkey, I did but just raise up the board, and it flew over my shoulders, scratch'd all my face, broke yon china, and whisk'd out of the window.

Sir Fran. Was ever such an unlucky rogue! Sirrah, I forbid you my house. Call the servants to get the monkey again: I wou'd stay myself to look it, but that you know my earnest business.

Scentw. Oh, my lady will be the best to lure it back; all them creatures love my lady extremely.

Miran. Go, go, dear Gardee, I hope I shall recover it.

Sir Fran. B'ye, b'ye, Dearee. Ah, Mischief, how you look now! b'ye, b'ye. [Exit.]

Miran. Scentwell, see him in the coach, and bring me word.

Scentw. Yes, Madam.

Miran. So, Sir, you have done your friend a signal piece of service, I suppose.

Marp. Why look you, Madam, if I have committed a fault, thank yourself; no man is more serviceable when I am let into a secret, and none more unlucky at finding it out. Who could divine your meaning? When you talk'd of a blunderbuss, who thought of a rendezvous? and when you talk'd of a monkey, who the devil dreamt of Sir George?

Miran. A sign you converse but little with our sex, when you can't reconcile contradictions.

Enter Scentwell.

Scentw. He's gone, Madam, as fast as the coach and six can carry him——

Enter Sir George.

Sir Geo. Then I may appear.

Marp. Dear Sir George, make my peace! On my soul, I did not think of you.

Sir Geo. I dare swear thou didst not.—Madam, I beg you to forgive him.

Miran. Well, Sir George, if he can be secret.

Marp. Ods heart, Madam, I'm as secret as a priest, when I'm trusted.

Sir Geo. Why 'tis with a priest our business is at present.

Scentw. Madam, here's Mrs. Isabinda's woman to wait on you.

Miran. Bring her up.

Enter Patch.

How do ye, Mrs. Patch? What news from your lady.

Patch. That's for your private ear, Madam. Sir George, there's a friend of yours has an urgent occasion for your assistance.

Sir Geo. His name.

Patch. Charles.

Marp. Ha! then there's something a foot that I know nothing of. I'll wait on you, Sir George.

Sir Geo. A third person may not be proper, perhaps; as soon as I have dispatched my own affairs, I am at his service: I'll send my servant to tell him I'll wait upon him in half an hour.

Miran. How came you employed in this message, Mrs. Patch?

Patch. Want of business, Madam: I am discharged by my master, but hope to serve my lady still.

Miran. How! discharged! you must tell me the whole story within.

Patch. With all my heart, Madam.

Marp. Pish! Pox, I wish I were fairly out of the house. I find marriage is the end of this secret: And now I am half mad to know what Charles wants him for.

[Aside.]

Sir Geo. Madam, I'm doubly press'd by love and friendship: this exigence admits of no delay. Shall we make Marplot of the party?

Miran. If you'll run the hazard, Sir George; I believe he means well.

Marp. Nay, nay, for my part, I desire to be let into nothing: I'll be gone, therefore pray don't mistrust me.

[Going.]

Sir Geo. So, now he has a mind to be gone to Charles: 'but not knowing what affairs he may have upon his hands at present,' I'm resolv'd he shan't stir. No, Mr. Marplot, you must not leave us, we want a third person. [Takes hold of him.]

Marp. I never had more mind to be gone in my life.

Miran. Come along then! if we fail in the voyage, thank yourself for taking this ill-starr'd gentleman on board.

Sir Geo. That vessel ne'er can unsuccessful prove,
Whose freight is beauty, and whose pilot's love.

ACT V.

SCENE, Sir Francis Gripe's.

Enter Miranda, Patch, and Scentwell.

Miran. WELL, Patch; I have done a strange bold thing! my fate is determin'd, and expectation is no more. Now, to avoid the impertinence and roguery of an old man, I have thrown myself into the extravagance of a young one: if he should despise, slight, or use me ill, there's no remedy from a husband but the grave; and that's a terrible sanctuary to one of my age and constitution.

Patch. O! fear not, madam, you'll find your account in Sir George Airy: it is impossible a man of sense should use a woman ill, endued with beauty, wit, and fortune. It must be the lady's fault, if she does not wear the unfashionable name of wife easy, when nothing but complaisance and good humour is requisite on either side to make them happy.

Miran. I long till I am out of this house, lest any accident should bring my guardian back. Scentwell, put my best jewels into the little casket, slip them into thy pocket, and let us march off to Sir Jealous's.

Scent. It shall be done, Madam. [*Exit Scentwell.*]

Patch. Sir George will be impatient, Madam. If their plot succeeds, we shall be well received; if not, he will be able to protect us. Besides, I long to know how my young lady fares.

Miran. Farewel, old Mammon, and thy detested walls: 'twill be no more, Sweet Sir Francis; I shall be compell'd to the odious task of dissembling no longer to get my own, and coax him with the wheedling names of my precious, my dear, dear Gardee. O heavens!

Enter Sir Francis behind.

Sir Fran. Ah! my sweet Chargee, don't be frightened. [*She starts.*] But thy poor Gardee has been abus'd, cheated, fool'd, betray'd: But nobody knows by whom.

Miran. Undone! past redemption. [*Aside.*]

Sir Fran. What! won't you speak to me, Chargee?

Miran. I am so surpris'd with joy to see you, I know not what to say.

Sir Fran. Poor dear girl! but do ye know that my son, or some such rogue, to rob or murder me, or both, contriv'd this journey? for upon the road I met my neighbour Squeezum well, and coming to town.

Miran. Good lack! good lack! what tricks are there in this world!

Enter Scentwell, with a Diamond Necklace in her Hand, not seeing Sir Francis.

Scentw. Madam, be pleas'd to tie this necklace on, for I can't get it into the— [*Seeing Sir Fran.*]

Miran. The wench is a fool, I think! Could you not have carried it to be mended, without putting it in the box?

Sir Fran. What's the matter?

Miran. Only, dearest, I bid her, I bid her—Your ill usage has put every thing out of my head. But won't you go, Gardee, and find out these fellows, and have them punished: and, and—

Sir Fran. Where should I look them, child? No, I'll sit me down contented with my safety, nor stir out of my own doors, till I go with thee to a parson.

Miran. [*Aside.*] If he goes into his closet, I am ruin'd. Oh! blest me, in this fright I had forgot Mrs. Patch.

Patch. Ay, Madam, and I stay for your speedy answer.

Miran. [*Aside.*] I must get him out of the house. Now assist me, fortune.

Sir Fran. Mrs. Patch, I profess I did not see you. How dost thou do, Mrs. Patch? Well, don't you repent leaving my Chargee?

Patch. Yes, every body must love her—but I come now—Madam, what did I come for? My invention is at the last ebb. [*Aside to Miranda.*]

Sir Fran. Nay, never whisper: tell me.

Miran. She came, dear Gardee, to invite me to her lady's wedding, and you shall go with me, Gardee: 'tis to be done this moment to a Spanish merchant. Old Sir Jealous keeps on his humour; the first minute he sees her, the next he marries her.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha! I'd go if I thought the sight of matrimony wou'd tempt Chargee to perform her promise: there was a smile, there was a consenting look with those pretty twinklers, worth a million. Ods precious, I am happier than the Great Mogul, the Emperor of China, or all the po-

tentates that are not in wars. Speak, confirm it, make me leap out of my skin.

Miran. When one has resolv'd, 'tis in vain to stand, shall I? shall I? if ever I marry, positively this is my wedding-day.

Sir Fran. O happy, happy man!—Verily I will beget a son the first night shall disinherit that dog Charles. I have estate enough to purchase a barony, and be the immortalizing the whole family of the Gripes.

Miran. Come then, Gardee, give me thy hand; let's to this house of Hymen.

My choice is fixt, let good or ill betide;

Sir Fran. The joyful bridegroom I—

Miran. And I the happy bride. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter Sir Jealous, meeting a Servant.

Serv. Sir, here's a couple of gentlemen enquire for you: one of them calls himself Signior Diego Babinetto.

Sir Jea. Ha! Signior Babinetto! Admit him instantly—Joyful minute! I'll have my daughter married to-night.

Enter Charles in a Spanish Habit, with Sir George dress'd like a Merchant.

Sir Jea. Senior, beso las manos vuestra merced es muy bien venido en esta tierra.

Cha. Senior, soy muy humilde, y muy obligado. Cryado vuestra merced: mi padre embia a vuestra merced, los mas profundos de sus respetos; y a comissionada este mercad del Ingles, de contuynr un negocio, que me haze el mas dichoso hombre del mundo, boziendo me su yerno.

Sir Jea. I am glad on't, for I find I have lost much of my Spanish. Sir, I am your most humble servant. Signior Don Diego Babinetto has informed me, that you are comission'd by Signior Don Pedro, &c. his worthy father.

Sir Geo. To see an affair of marriage consummated between a daughter of yours and Signior Diego Babinetto his son here. True, Sir, such a trust is repos'd in me, as that letter will inform you.—I hope 'twill pass upon him. [*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. Ay, 'tis his hand. [*Gives him a letter.*]

Sir Geo. Good—you have counterfeited to a nicety, Charles. [*Seems to read.*]

Cha. If the whole plot succeeds as well, I'm happy. [*Aside to Charles.*]

Sir Jea. Sir, I find by this, that you are a man of honour and probity: I think, Sir, he calls you Meanwell.

Sir Geo. Meanwell is my name, Sir.

Sir Jea. A very good name, and very significant.

Cha. Yes, faith, if he knew all. [*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. For to mean well is to be honest, and to be honest is the virtue of a friend, and a friend is the delight and support of human society.

Sir Geo. You shall find that I'll discharge the part of a friend in what I have undertaken, Sir Jealous.

Cha. But little does he think to whom. [*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Therefore, Sir, I must intreat the presence of your fair daughter, and the assistance of your chaplain; for Signior Don Pedro strictly enjoin'd me to see the marriage rites perform'd as soon as we should arrive, to avoid the accidental overtures of Venus.

Sir Jea. Overtures of Venus!

Sir Geo. Ay, Sir; that is, those little hawking females that traverse the Park and Playhouse, to put off their damag'd ware—They fasten upon foreigners like leeches, and watch their arrival as the Kentish men do a shipwreck. I warrant you they have heard of him already.

Sir Jea. Nay, I know this town swarms with them.

Sir Geo. Ay, and then you know the Spaniards are naturally amorous, but very constant: the first face fixes 'em; and it may be very dangerous to let him ramble ere he is tied.

Cba. Well hinted.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. Pat to my purpose—Well, Sir, there is but one thing more, and they shall be married instantly.

Cba. Pray Heaven that one thing more don't spoil all!

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. Don Pedro writ me word, in his last but one, that he design'd the sum of five thousand crowns by way of jointure for my daughter; and that it should be paid into my hand upon the day of marriage.

Cba. Oh! the devil.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. In order to lodge it in some of our funds, in case she should become a widow, and return for England.

Sir Geo. Pox on't, this is an unlucky turn. What shall I say?

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. And he does not mention one word of it in this letter.

Cba. I don't know how he should.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Humph! True, Sir Jealous, he told me such a thing, but, but, but, but—he, he, he, he—he did not imagine that you would insist upon the very day; for, for, for money, you know, is dangerous returning by sea, an, an, an, an—

Cba. Zounds, say we have brought it in commodities.

[*Aside to Sir George.*]

Sir Geo. And so, Sir, he has sent it in merchandize, tobacco, sugars, spices, lemons, and so forth, which shall be turn'd into money with all expedition: in the mean time, Sir, if you please to accept of my bond for performance—

Sir Jea. It is enough, Sir: I am so pleas'd with the countenance of Signior Diego, and the harmony of your name, that I'll take your word, and will fetch my daughter this moment.—Within there! [*Enter Servant.*] Desire Mr. Tackum, my neighbour's chaplain, to walk hither.

Serv. Yes, Sir.

[*Exit.*]

Sir Jea. Gentlemen, I'll return in an instant. [*Exit.*]

Cba. Wond'rous well, let me embrace thee.

Sir Geo. Egad that five thousand crowns had like to have ruined the plot.

Cba. But that's over! and, if fortune throws no more rubs in our way—

Sir Geo. Thou'lt carry the prize—But hift, here he comes.

Enter Sir Jealous, dragging in Isabinda.

Sir Jea. Coome along, you stubborn baggage you, come along.

Isab. Oh, hear me, Sir! hear me but speak one word! Do not destroy my everlasting peace: My soul abhors this Spaniard you have chose, Nor can I wed him without being curs'd.

Sir Jea. How's that!

Isab. Let this posture move your tender nature.

[*Kneels.*]

For ever will I hang upon these knees,
Nor loose my hands till you cut off my hold,
If you refuse to hear me, Sir.

Cba. Oh! that I could discover myself to her!

[*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Have a care what you do. You had better trust to his obstinacy.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. Did you ever see such a perverse slut?
Oh, I say.—Mr. Meanwell, pray help me a little.

Sir Geo. Rise, Madam, and do not disoblige your father, who has provided a husband worthy of you; one that will love you equal with his soul, and one that you will love, when once you know him.

Isab. Oh! never, never.

Could I suspect that falshood in my heart,
I would this moment tear it from my breast,
And straight present him with the treacherous part.

Cba. O my charming faithful dear!

[*Aside.*]

Sir Jea. Falshood! Why, who the devil are you in love with? Don't provoke me; for by St. Iago I shall beat you, housewife.

Cba. Heaven forbid! for I shall infallibly discover myself if he should.

Sir Geo. Have patience, Madam! and look at him: Why will you prepossess yourself against a man that is master of all the charms you would desire in a husband?

Sir Jea. Ay, look at him, Isabinda: *Senior passe vind adelante.*

Cba. My heart bleeds to see her grieve, whom I imagin'd would with joy receive me. *Seniora, oblige me vuestra merced de su mano.*

Sir Jea. [*Pulling up her head.*] Hold up your head, hold up your head, huffey, and look at him: Is there a properer, handsomer, better-shap'd fellow in England, ye jade you? Ha! see, see the obstinate baggage shuts her eyes: by St. Iago, I have a good mind to beat 'em out.

[*Pushes her down.*]

Isab. Do, then, Sir, kill me, kill me instantly.

'Tis much the kinder action of the two;
For 'twill be worse than death to wed him.

Sir Geo. Sir Jealous, you are too passionate. Give me leave; I'll try, by gentle words, to work her to your purpose.

Sir Jea. I pray do, Mr. Meanwell, I pray do: she'll break my heart. [*Weeps.*] There is, in that, jewels of the value of three thousand pounds, which were her mother's, and a paper wherein I have settled one half of my estate upon her now, and the whole when I die; but provided she marries this gentleman; else by St. Iago I'll turn her out of doors to beg or starve. Tell her this, Mr. Meanwell, pray do.

[*Walks off.*]

Sir Geo. Ha! this is beyond expectation—Trust to me, Sir, I'll lay the dangerous consequence of disobeying you at this juncture before her, I warrant you.

Cba. A sudden joy runs thro' my heart like a propitious omen.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. Come, Madam, do not blindly cast your life away, just in the moment you would wish to save it.

Isab. Pray, cease your trouble, Sir; I have no wish but sudden death, to free me from this hated Spaniards. If you are his friend, inform him what I say; my heart is given to another youth, whom I love with the same strength of passion that I hate this Diego; with whom if I am forc'd to wed, my own hand shall cut the Gordian knot.

Sir Geo. Suppose this Spaniard, which you strive to shun, shou'd be the very man to whom you'd fly?

Isab. Ha!

Sir Geo. Would you not blame your rash resolve and curse your eyes that would not look on Charles?

Isab. On Charles! 'Oh, you have inspir'd new life, and collected every wandering sense.' Where is he? Oh! let me fly into his arms.

[*Rises.*]

Sir Geo. Hold, hold, hold. 'Sdeath, Madam, you'll ruin all; your father believes him to be Signior Babinetto; compose yourself a little, pray, Madam.

[*He runs to Sir Jealous.*]

Cba. Her eyes declare she knows me.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Geo. She begins to hear reason, Sir; the fear of being turn'd out of doors has done it.

[Runs back to Isabinda.]

Isab. 'Tis he; O my ravish'd soul!

Sir Geo. Take heed, Madam, you don't betray yourself. Seem with reluctance to consent, or 'you are undone;' [Runs to Sir Jealous.] speak gently to her, Sir; I'm sure she'll yield; I see it in her face.

Sir Jea. Well, Isabinda, can you refuse to bless a father, whose only care is to make you happy, as Mr. Meanwell has inform'd you? Come, wipe thy eyes; nay, prythee do, or thou wilt break thy father's heart; see, thou bring'st the tears in mine, to think of thy undutiful carriage to me. [Weeps.]

Isab. Oh! do not weep, Sir; your tears are like a poignard to my soul; do with me what you please, I am all obedience.

Sir Jea. Ha! then thou art my child again.

Sir Geo. 'Tis done; and now, friend, the day's thy own.

Cha. The happiest of my life, if nothing intervene.

Sir Jea. And wilt thou love him?

Isab. I will endeavour it, Sir.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Sir, here is Mr. Tackum.

Sir Jea. Shew him into the parlour.—*Senhor tome vind Jacipora; cette momento les junta les manos.*

[Gives her to Charles.]

Cha. 'Oh transport!'—*Senior, yo la recibo como se deve un tesoro tan grande.*—'O my joy, my life, my soul!'

[Embraces.]

Isab. My faithful, everlasting comfort.

Sir Jea. Now, Mr. Meanwell, let's to the parson; *Who, by his art, will join this pair for life,*

Make me the happiest father, her the happiest wife.

[Exit.]

SCENE changes to the Street before Sir Jealous's Door.

Enter Marplot, solus.

Marp. I have hunted all over the town for Charles, but can't find him; and, by Whispy's scouting at the end of the street, I suspect he must be in the house again. I am inform'd, too, that he has borrowed a Spanish habit out of the Play-house: what can it mean?

Enter a Servant of Sir Jealous's to him out of the House. Hark'e, Sir, do you belong to this house?

Serv. Yes, Sir.

Marp. Pray can you tell me if there be a gentleman in it, in a Spanish habit?

Serv. There's a Spanish gentleman within, that is just a going to marry my young lady, Sir.

Marp. Are you sure he is a Spanish gentleman?

Serv. I'm sure he speaks no English, that I hear of.

Marp. Then that can't be him I want; for 'tis an English gentleman, tho' I suppose he may be dress'd like a Spaniard, that I enquire after.

Serv. Ha! who knows but this may be an impostor? I'll inform my master; for if he should be impos'd upon, he'll beat us all round. [Aside.] Pray, come in, Sir, and see if this be the person you enquire for.

SCENE changes to the inside of the House.

Enter Marplot.

Marp. So, this was a good contrivance: if this be Charles, now he will wonder how I found him out.

Enter Servant and Sir Jealous.

Sir Jea. What is your earnest business, block-head, that you must speak with me before the ceremony's past? Ha! who's this?

Serv. Why, this gentleman, Sir, wants another gentleman in a Spanish habit, he says.

Sir Jea. In a Spanish habit! 'tis some friend of Signior Don Diego's, I warrant. Sir, I suppose you would speak with Signior Babinetto—

Marp. Hey day! what the devil does he say now!—Sir, I don't understand you.

Sir Jea. Don't you understand Spanish, Sir?

Marp. Not I, indeed, Sir.

Sir Jea. I thought you had known Signior Babinetto.

Marp. Not I, upon my word, Sir.

Sir Jea. What then, you'd speak with his friend, the English merchant, Mr. Meanwell?

Marp. Neither, Sir, not I.

Sir Jea. Why, who are you, then, Sir? And what do you want? [In an angry tone.]

Marp. Nay, nothing at all, not I, Sir.—Pox on him! I wish I were out, he begins to exalt his voice, I shall be beaten again.

Sir Jea. Nothing at all, Sir! Why, then, what business have you in my house? ha!

Serv. You said you wanted a gentleman in a Spanish habit.

Marp. Why, ay, but his name is neither Babinetto nor Meanwell.

Sir Jea. What is his name, then, firrah?—Ha! Now I look at you again, I believe you are the rogue that threatened me with half a dozen myrmidons—Speak, Sir, who is it you look for? or, or—

Marp. A terrible old dog!—Why, Sir, only an honest young fellow of my acquaintance—I thought that here might be a ball, and that he might have been here in a masquerade: 'tis Charles, Sir Francis Gripe's son, because I know he us'd to come hither sometimes.

Sir Jea. Did he so?—Not that I know of, I'm sure. Pray heaven that this be Don Diego—If I should be trick'd now—Ha! my heart misgives me plaguily—Within there! stop the marriage—Run, firrah, call all my servants! I'll be satisfied that this is Signior Pedro's son, ere he has my daughter.

Marp. Ha! Sir George! What have I done now? Enter Sir George with a drawn Sword between the Scenes.

Sir Geo. Ha! Marplot here—Oh, the unlucky dog. What's the matter, Sir Jealous?

Sir Jea. Nay, I don't know the matter, Mr. Meanwell.

Marp. Upon my soul, Sir George— [Going up to Sir George.]

Sir Jea. Nay, then, I'm betray'd, ruin'd, undone. Thieves, traitors, rogues! [Offers to go in.] Stop the marriage, I say—

Sir Geo. I say go on, Mr. Tackum—Nay, no entering here; I guard this passage, old gentleman: the act and deed were both your own, and I'll see 'em sign'd, or die for't.

Enter Servants.

Sir Jea. A pox on the act and deed!—Fall on, knock him down.

Sir Geo. Ay, come on, scoundrels: I'll prick your jackets for you.

Sir Jea. Zounds, firrah, I'll be reveng'd on you. [Beats Marplot.]

Sir Geo. Ay, there your vengeance is due. Ha, ha! *Marp.* Why, what do you beat me for? I han't marry'd your daughter.

Sir Jea. Rascals! why don't you knock him down?

Serv. We are afraid of his sword, Sir: if you'll take that from him, we'll knock him down presently.

Enter Charles and Isabinda.

Sir Jea. Seize her, then.

Cha. Rascals, retire, she's my wife: touch her if you dare; I'll make dog's-meat of you.

Sir Jea. Ah! downright English—Oh, oh, oh, oh!

Enter Sir Francis Gripe, Miranda, Patch, Scentwell, and Whifper.

Sir Fran. Into the house of joy we enter without knocking—Ha! I think 'tis the house of sorrow, Sir Jealous.

Sir Jea. O Sir Francis! are you come? What, was this your contrivance, to abuse, trick, and chouse me out of my child!

Sir Fran. My contrivance! What do you mean?

Sir Jea. No, you don't know your son there in a Spanish habit?

Sir Fran. How! my son in a Spanish habit. Sirrah, you'll come to be hang'd; get out of my sight, ye dog! get out of my sight.

Sir Jea. Get out of your sight, Sir! Get out with your bags: let's see what you'll give him now to maintain my daughter on.

Sir Fran. Give him! he shall be never the better for a penny of mine—and you might have look'd after your daughter better, Sir Jealous. Trick'd, quotha! Egad, I think you design'd to trick me: But look ye, gentlemen, I believe I shall trick you both. This lady is my wife, do you see? And my estate shall descend only to the heirs of her body.—

Sir Geo. Lawfully begotten by me—I shall be extremely obliged to you, Sir Francis.

Sir Fran. Ha, ha, ha, ha! poor Sir George! You see your project was of no use. Does not your hundred pound stick in your stomach? Ha, ha, ha!

Sir Geo. No, faith, Sir Francis, this lady has given me a cordial for that. [*Takes her by the hand.*]

Sir Fran. Hold, Sir, you have nothing to say to this lady.

Sir Geo. Nor you nothing to do with my wife, Sir.

Sir Fran. Wife, Sir!

Miran. Ay really, Guardian, 'tis even so. I hope you'll forgive my first offence.

Sir Fran. What, have you chous'd me out of my consent, and your writings then, mistress, ha!

Miran. Out of nothing but my own, Guardian.

Sir Jea. Ha, ha, ha! 'tis some comfort at least to see you are over-reach'd as well as myself. Will you fettle your estate upon your son, now?

Sir Fran. He shall starve first.

Miran. That I have taken care to prevent. There, Sir, are the writings of your uncle's estate, which have been your due these three years.

[*Gives Charles papers.*]

Cha. I shall study to deserve this favour.

Sir Fran. What have you robb'd me too, mistress! Egad I'll make you restore 'em—Huffey, I will so.

Sir Jea. Take care I don't make you pay the arrears, Sir. 'Tis well it's no worse, since 'tis no

better. Come, young man, seeing thou hast outwitted me, take her, and bless you both.

Cha. I hope, Sir, you'll bestow your blessing too, 'tis all I'll ask. [*Kneels.*]

Sir Fran. Confound you all! [*Exit.*]

Marp. Mercy upon us, how he looks!

Sir Geo. Ha, ha, ha! ne'er mind his curses, Charles; thou'lt thrive not one jot the worse for 'em. Since this gentleman is reconcil'd, we are all made happy.

Sir Jea. I always lov'd precaution, and took care to avoid dangers. But when a thing was past, I ever had philosophy to be easy.

Cha. Which is the true sign of a great soul: I lov'd your daughter, and she me, and you shall have no reason to repent her choice.

Isab. You will not blame me, Sir, for loving my own country best.

Marp. So here's every body happy, I find, but poor Peelgardick. I wonder what satisfaction I shall have, for being cuff'd, kick'd, and beaten in your service.

Sir Jea. I have been a little too familiar with you, as things are fallen out; but, since there's no help for't, you must forgive me.

Marp. Egad, I think so—but provided that you be not so familiar for the future.

Sir Geo. Thou hast been an unlucky rogue.

Marp. But very honest.

Cha. That I'll vouch for; and freely forgive thee.

Sir Geo. And I'll do you one piece of service more, Marplot. I'll take care that Sir Francis make you master of your estate.

Marp. That will make me as happy as any of you.

Patch. Your humble servant begs leave to remind you, Madam.

Isab. Sir, I hope you'll give me leave to take Patch into favour again.

Sir Jea. Nay, let your husband look to that, I have done with my care.

Cha. Her own liberty shall always oblige me. Here's nobody but honest Whifper and Mrs. Scentwell to be provided for now. It shall be left to their choice, to marry or keep their services.

Whifp. Nay then, I'll stick to my master.

Scentw. Coxcomb! and I prefer my lady before a footman.

Sir Jea. Hark, I hear the music; the fiddlers smell a wedding. What say you, young fellows, will you have a dance?

Sir Geo. With all my heart; call 'em in.

A DANCE.

Sir Jea. Now let us in and refresh ourselves with a cheerful glass, in which we'll bury all animosities; And

*By my example let all parents move,
And never strive to cross their children's love;
But still submit that care to Providence above.*



THE CONTRIVANCES.

Written by HARRY CAREY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

ARGUS, Father to Arethusa.
HEARTY, Father to Rovewell.
ROVEWELL, in love with Arethusa.
ROBIN, Servant to Rovewell.
First Mob.
Second Mob.

Third Mob.
Woman Mob.
Boy.
ARETHUSA, in love with Rovewell.
BETTY, her Maid.

SCENE, LONDON.

SCENE, Rovewell's Lodgings.

Robin, *solus*.

WELL! tho' pimping is the most honourable and profitable of all professions, it is certainly the most dangerous and fatiguing; but of all fatigues, there's none like following a virtuous mistress—There's not one letter I carry, but I run the risque of kicking, caning, or pumping; nay, often hanging—Let me see; I have committed three burglaries to get one letter to her—Now if my master should not get the gypsey at last, I have ventur'd my sweet person to a fair purpose—But, Basta! here comes my master and his friend Mr. Hearty—I must hasten and get our disguises.

*And if dame fortune fail us now to win her,
Oh! all ye gods above! the devil's in her.* [Exit.

Enter Rovewell and Hearty.

Hearty. Why so melancholy, Captain? Come, come, a man of your gaiety and courage shou'd never take a disappointment so much to heart.

Rov. 'Sdeath! to be prevented when I had brought my design so near perfection!

Hearty. Were you less open and daring in your attempts, you might hope to succeed—The old gentleman, you know, is cautious to a degree; his daughter under a strict confinement: would you use more of the fox than the lion, fortune, perhaps, might throw an opportunity in your way—But you must have patience.

Rov. Who can have patience, when danger is so near? Read this letter, and then tell me what room there is for patience.

Hearty. [Reads.] "To-morrow will prevent all our vain struggles to get to each other.—I am then to be married to my eternal aversion; you know the fop, 'tis Cuckoo, who, having a large estate,

"is forc'd upon me; but my heart can be none but
"Rovewell's. Immediately after the receipt of this,
"meet Betty at the old place; there is yet one in-
"vention left, if you pursue it closely, you may
"perhaps release her, who wou'd be your—"

ARETHUSA."

Rov. Yes, Arethusa, I will release thee, or die in the attempt!—Dear friend, excuse my rudeness; you know the reason.

A I R.

*I'll face ev'ry danger
To rescue my dear,
For fear is a stranger
Where love is sincere.
Repulses but fire us,
Despair we despise,
If beauty inspire us
To pant for the prize.* [Exit.

Hearty. Well, go thy way, and get her, for thou deserv'st her, o' my conscience.—How have I been deceiv'd in this boy! I find him the very reverse of what his stepmother represented him; and am now sensible it was only her ill usage that forc'd my child away—His not having seen me since he was five years old, renders me a perfect stranger to him—Under that pretence I have got into his acquaintance, and find him all I wish—If this plot of his fails, I believe my money must buy him the girl at last. [Exit.

SCENE, a Chamber in Argus's House.

Arethusa *sola*.

A I R.

Arg. See! the radiant queen of night
Sheds on all her kindly beams;
Gilds the plains with chearful lights,
And sparkles in the silver streams.
Smiles adorn the face of nature,
Tasteless all things yet appear

*Unto me, a hapless creature,
In the absence of my dear.*

Enter Argus.

Arg. Pray, daughter, what linguo is that same you chaunt and sputter out at this rate?

Are. English, Sir.

Arg. English, quotha! adod I took it to be nonsense.

Are. 'Tis a hymn to the moon.

Arg. A hymn to the moon! I'll have none of your hymns in my house—Give me the book, housewife.

Are. I hope, Sir, there's no crime in reading a harmless poem.

Arg. Give me the book, I say; poems, with a pox! what are they good for, but to blow up the fire of love, and make young wenches wanton—but I have taken care of you, mistress! for to-morrow you shall have a husband to stay your stomach, and no less a person than Squire Cuckoo.

Are. You will not, surely, be so cruel to marry me to a man I cannot love.

Arg. Why, what sort of a man would you have, Mrs. Minx?

A I R.

Are. *Geenteel in personage,
Conduet in equipage,
Noble in beritage,
Generous and free.
Brawe, not romantic;
Learn'd, not pedantic;
Frolick, not frantick;
This must be be.
Honour maintaining,
Meanness disdainning,
Still entertaining,
Engaging and new.
Neat, but not finical;
Sage, but not cynical;
Never tyrannical;
But ever true.*

Arg. Why is not Mr. Cuckoo all this? adod he's a brisk young fellow, and a little feather-bed doctrine will soon put the captain out of your head; and to put you out of his power, you shall be given over to the squire to-morrow.

Are. Surely, Sir, you will at least defer it one day.

Arg. No, not one hour—To-morrow morning, at eight of the clock precisely.—In the mean time, take notice the squire's sister is hourly expected; so pray do you be civil and sociable with her, and let me have none of your pouts and glouts, as you tender my displeasure. *[Exit.]*

Are. To-morrow is short warning; but we may be too cunning for you yet, old gentleman.

Enter Betty.

Are. O Betty! welcome a thousand times! what news? have you seen the captain?

Bet. Yes, Madam; and if you were to see him in his new rigging, you'd split your sides with laughing—Such a hoyden, such a piece of country stuff. you never set your eyes on—But the petticoats are so soon thrown off, and if good luck attends us, you may easily conjure Miss Malkin, the squire's sister, into your own dear captain.

Are. But when will they come?

Bet. Instantly, Madam; he only stays to settle matters for our escape. He's in deep consultation with his privy-counsellor, Robin, who is to attend him in the quality of a country putt—They'll both be here in a moment; so let's in, and pack up the jewels, that we may be ready at once to leap into the saddle of liberty, and ride full speed to your desires.

Are. Dear Betty, let's make haste; I think ev'ry moment an age till I'm free from this bondage.

A I R.

*When parents obstinate and cruel prove,
And force us to a man we cannot love;
'Tis fit we disappoint the sordid elves,
And wisely get us husbands for ourselves.*

Bet. There they are—in, in. *[Knocking without.]*

Argus from above.

Arg. You're woundy hasty, methinks, to knock at that rate—This is certainly some courtier come to borrow money, I know it by the saucy rapping of the footman—Who's at the door?

Rob. Tummos! *[Without doors.]*

Arg. Tummos! who's Tummos? Who would you speak with, friend?

Rob. With young master's vather-in-law, that mun be, master Hardguts.

Arg. And what's your business with master Hardguts?

Rob. Why young mistress is come out o' the country to see brother's wife that mun be, that's all.

Arg. Odso, the squire's sister; I am sorry I made her wait so long. *[Goes down and lets 'em in.]*

SCENE, a Chamber.

Argus introducing Rovewell in Woman's Cloaths, followed by Robin as a Clown.

Arg. Save you, fair lady, you're welcome to town. *[Rovewell curtsies.]*—A very modest maiden, truly. How long have you been in town?

Rob. Why an hour and a bit, or so—we just put up horses at King's Arms yonder, and staid a crum to zee poor things feed, for your London ostlers give little enough to poor beasts! and you stond not by 'em your zell, and see 'em fed; as soon as your back's turn'd, adod they'll cheat you afore your face.

Arg. Why how now, Clodpate? are you to speak before your mistress, and with your hat on, too? Is that your country breeding?

Rob. Why and it's on, it's on, and it's off, it's off—what cares Tummos for your false-hearted London compliments? And you'd have an answer from young mistress, you mun look to Tummos; for she's so main bashful, she never speaks one word, but her prayers, and thos'n so softly, that nobody can hear her.

Arg. I like her the better for that; silence is a heavenly virtue in a woman, but very rare to be found in this wicked place.—Have you seen your brother, pretty lady! since you came to town? *[Rovewell curtsies.]* O miraculous modesty! would all women were thus! Can't you speak, Madam?

[Rovewell curtsies again.]

Rob. And you get a word from her, 'tis more nor she has spoken to us these fourscore and seven long miles; but young mistress will prate fast enough, and you set her among your women folk.

Arg. Say't thou so, honest fellow! I'll send her to those that have tongue enough, I warrant you.—Here, Betty.

Enter Betty.

—Take this young lady to my daughter; 'tis Squire Cuckoo's sister; and d'ye hear? make much of her, I charge you.

Bet. Yes, Sir—Please to follow me, Madam.

Rob. Now, you rogue, for a lye an hour and a half long, to keep the old fellow in suspense.

[Aside to Robin.—Exit with Betty.]

Rob. Well, master! don't you think my mistress a dainty young woman?—She's wonderfully bemir'd in our country for her shapes.

Arg. Oh, she's a fine creature, indeed!—But where's the squire, honest friend?

THE CONTRIVANCES.

3

Rob. Why one cannot find a mon out in this same Londonshire, there are so many taverns and chockling-houses; you may as well seek a needle in a hay-fardel, as they say'n i' the country.—I was at 'squire's lodging yonder, and there was nobody but a prate-apace whorson of a footboy, and he told me maister was at chockling-house, and all the while the vixen did nothing but taunt and laugh at me;—I 'cod I cou'd have found in my heart to have gi'n him a good wherrit in the chops. So I went to one chockling-house, and another chockling-house, till I was quite weary; and I could see nothing but a many people supping hot suppings, and reading your gazing papers: we had much ado to find out your worship's house; the vixen boys set us o' thick side, and that side, till we were quite almost lost; and it were not for an honest fellow that know'd your worship, and set us i' the right way.

Arg. It's pity they should use strangers so; but as to your young mistress, does she never speak?

Rob. Adod, Sir, never to a mon; why she wo' not speak to her own father, she's so main bashful.

Arg. That's strange, indeed! but how does my friend, Sir Roger? he's well, I hope.

Rob. Hearty still, Sir—He has drunk down six fox-hunters sin last Lammass!—He holds his old course still; twenty pipes a day, a cup of mum in the morning, a tankard of ale at noon, and three bottles of stingo at night. The same mon now he was thirty years ago; and young squire Yedward is just come from varfity: lawd, he's mainly grow'd sin you saw him. He's a fine proper tall gentleman now; why he's near upon as tall as you or I, mun.

Arg. Good now, good now! But would'st drink, honest friend?

Rob. I don't care an I do, a bit or so; for, to say truth, I'm mortal dry.

Arg. Here, John—

Enter Servant.

Take this honest fellow down, and make him welcome. When your mistress is ready to go, we'll call you.

Rob. Ah! pray take care and make much of me, for I am a bitter honest fellow and you did but know me. *[Exit Robin with Servant.]*

Arg. These country fellows are very blunt, but very honest. I wou'd fain hear his mistress talk. He said she'd find her tongue when she was amongst those of her own sex.—I'll go listen for once, and hear what the young tits have to say to one another. *[Exit.]*

Enter Rowewell, Arethusa, and Betty.

Row. Dear Arethusa delay not the time thus, your father will certainly come in and surprize us.

Bet. Let's make hay while the sun shines, Madam! I long to be out of this prison.

Are. So do I, but not on the captain's conditions, to be his prisoner for life.

Row. I shall run mad if you trifle thus: name your conditions; I sign my consent before-hand. *[Kisses her.]*

Are. Indeed, captain, I'm afraid to trust you.

A I R.

Cease to persuade,

Nor say you love sincerely,

When you've betray'd

You'll treat me most severely,

And fly what once you did pursue.

Happy the fair

Who ne'er believes you,

But gives despair,

Or else deceives you,

And learns inconstancy from you.

Row. Unkind Arethusa! I little expected this usage from you.

A I R.

When did you see

Any falsehood in me,

That thus you unkindly suspect me;

Speak, speak your mind,

For I fear you're inclin'd,

In spite of my truth, to reject me.

If I must be so,

To the wars I will go,

Where danger my passion shall smother;

I'd rather perish there,

Than linger in despair,

Or see you in the arms of another.

Enter Argus behind.

Arg. So, so, this as it should be: they are as gracious as can be already.—How the young tit smuggles her! Adod, she kisses with a hearty good will.

Are. I must confess, captain, I am half inclin'd to believe you.

Arg. Captain! how's this? blest my eye-sight! I know the villain now; but I'll be even with him.

Bet. Dear Madam, don't trifle so, the parson's at the very next door, you'll be tack'd together in an instant, and then I'll trust you to come back to your cage again, if you can do it with a safe conscience.

Arg. Here's a treacherous jade! but I'll do your business for you, Mrs. Jezabel.

Bet. Consider, Madam, what a life you lead here; what a jealous, ill-natur'd, watchful, covetous, barbarous, old cuff of a father you have to deal with—What a glorious opportunity this is, and what a sad, sad, very sad thing it is, to die a maid!

A I R.

Would you live a stale virgin for ever,

Sure you're out of your senses,

Or these are pretences;

Can you part with a person so clever?

In truth you are highly to blame.

And you, Mr. Lover, to trifle;

I thought that a soldier

Was wiser and bolder!

A warrior should plunder and rifle;

A captain!—Oh, fly for shame!

Arg. If that jade dies a maid, I'll die a martyr.

Bet. In short, Madam, if you stay much longer, you may repent it every vein in your heart—The old hunks will undoubtedly pop in upon us and discover all, and then we're undone for ever.

Arg. You may go to the devil for ever, Mrs. impudence.

Are. Well, captain, if you should deceive me.

Row. If I do, may Heaven—

Are. Nay, no swearing, captain, for fear you shou'd prove like the rest of your sex.

Row. How can you doubt me, Arethusa, when you know how much I love you?

Arg. A wheedling dog! But I'll spoil his sport anon.

Bet. Come, come away, dear Madam!—I have the jewels: but stay, I'll go first, and see if the coast be clear. *[Argus meets her.]*

Arg. Where are you a going, pretty maiden?

Bet. Only do—do—do—down stairs, Sir.

Arg. And what hast thou got there, child?

Bet. Nothing but pi—pi—pins, Sir.

Arg. Here, give me the pins, and do you go to hell, Mrs. Minx. Dy'e hear; out of my house this moment; these are chamber-jades, forsooth—*O tempora! O mores!* what an age is this? Get you in, forsooth, I'll talk with you anon. *[Exit Arethusa.]* So, Captain, are those your regimental clothes? I'll

THE CONTRIVANCES.

assure you they become you mightily. If you did but see yourself now, how much like a hero you look! *Ecce signum!* ha, ha, ha!

Row. Blood and fury! stop your grinning, or I'll stretch your mouth with a vengeance.

Arg. Nay, nay, Captain Bellwagger, if you're so passionate, it's high time to call aid and assistance: Here, Richard, Thomas, John, help me to lay hold on this fellow; you have no sword now, Captain; no sword, d'ye mark me.

Enter Servants and Robin.

Row. But I have a pistol, Sir, at your service.

Arg. O Lord! O Lord!

Row. And I'll unload it in your breast, if you stir one step after me. [Exit.]

Arg. A bloody-minded dog! But lay hold on that rogue there, that country cheat.

Rob. See here, gentlemen, are two little bulldogs of the same breed, [*Presenting two pistols.*] they are wonderful scourers of the brain; so that if you offer to molest or follow me—you understand me, gentlemen; you understand me.

1st Ser. Yes, yes, we understand you, with a pox.

2d Ser. The devil go with 'em, I say.

Arg. Ay, ay, good-bye to you, in the devil's name. A terrible dog! what a fright he has put me in!—I shan't be myself this month; and you, ye cowardly rascals, to stand by and see my life in danger; get out, ye slaves, out of my house, I say—I'll put an end to all this; for I'll not have a servant in the house—I'll carry all the keys in my pocket, and never sleep more. What a murdering son of a whore is this? But I'll prevent him; for to-morrow he shall be married certainly, and then my furious gentleman can have no hopes left—A Jezabel, to love a red-coat without any money!—Had he but money, if he wanted sense, manners, or even manhood it self, it not matter'd a pin—but to want money is the devil! Well, I'll secure her under lock and key till to-morrow; and if her husband can't keep her from captain-hunting, e'en let her bring home a fresh pair of horns every time she goes out upon the chace. [Exit.]

SCENE, a Chamber.

Arethusa discovered sitting melancholy on a Couch.

A I R.

*O leave me to complain
My loss of liberty;
I never more shall see my swain,
Nor ever more be free.
O cruel, cruel fate!
What joy can I receive,
When, in the arms of one I hate,
I'm doom'd, alas! to live?
Ye pitying powers above,
That see my soul's dismay;
O! bring me back the man I love,
Or take my life away.*

Enter Argus.

Arg. So, lady! you're welcome home!—See how the pretty turtle sits moaning the loss of her mate!—What, not a word, Thufy? not a word, child? Come, come, come, don't be in the dumps now, and I'll fetch the captain, or the squire's sister; perhaps they may make it prattle a bit—Ah! ungracious girl! Is all my care come to this? Is this the gratitude you shew your uncle's memory, to throw away what he had bustled so hard for at a mad rate? Did he leave you 12,000*l.* think you, to make you no better than a soldier's trull, to follow a camp? To carry a knapsack? This is what you'd have, mistress! Is it not?

Are. This and ten thousand times worse, were better with the man I love, than to be chain'd to the nauseous embraces of one I hate.

Arg. A very dutiful lady, indeed! I'll make you sing another song to-morrow; and till then, I'll leave you in *salva custodia* to consider.—B'ye, Thufy!

Are. How barbarous is the covetousness and caution of ill-natur'd parents? They toil for estates, with a view to make posterity happy; and then, by mistaken prudence, they match us to our aversion; but I am resolv'd not to suffer tamely, however:—They shall see, tho' my body's weak, my resolution's strong; and I may yet find spirit enough to plague them.

A I R.

*Sooner than I'll my love forego,
And lose the man I prize,
I'll bravely combat ev'ry war,
Or fall a sacrifice.
Nor bolts, nor bars, shall me controul,
I death and danger dare;
Restraint but fires the active soul,
And urges fierce despair.
The window now shall be my gate,
I'll either fall or fly;
Before I live with him I hate,
For him I love I'll die.* [Exit.]

SCENE, The Street.

Heartwell and Rowewell meeting.

Rowe. So, my dear friend, here already!—This is very kind.

Heart. Sure, captain, this lady must have some extraordinary merit, for whom you undertake such difficulties! What are her particular charms, besides her money?

Rowe. I'll tell you, Sir.

A I R.

*Without affectation, gay, youthful, and pretty;
Without pride or meanness, familiar and witty;
Without forms obliging, good natur'd and free;
Without art as lovely, as lowly can be.
She acts what she thinks, and she thinks what she says,
Regardless alike both of censure and praise;
Her thoughts, and her words and her actions are such,
That none can admire 'em, or praise her too much.
Heart. Well, success attend you—You know where to find me, when there's occasion? [Exit.]*

Enter Boy.

Boy. Sir, Sir! I want to speak with you.

[Whispers Rowewell.]

Rowe. Is your mistress lock'd up, say you!

Boy. Yes, Sir, and Betty's turn'd away, and all the men-servants, and there's no living soul in the house but our old cook-maid, and I, and my master, and Mrs. Thufy; and she cries, and cries her eyes out almost.

Rowe. O! the tormenting news! But if the garri-son is so weak, the castle may be the sooner storm'd. How did you get out?

Boy. Thro' the kitchen-window, Sir.

Rowe. Shew me the window presently.

Boy. A-lack-a-day, it won't do, Sir! That plot won't take!

Rowe. Why, Sirrah?

Boy. You are something too big, Sir.

Rowe. I'll try that, however.

Boy. Indeed, Sir, you can't get your leg in; but I could put you in a way.

Rowe. How, dear boy?

Boy. I can lend you the key of Mrs. Thufy's chamber---if you can contrive to get into the house. But you must be sure to let my mistress out.

Row. How could'st thou get it? This is almost a miracle.

Boy. I pick'd it out of my master's coat pocket this morning, Sir, as I was brushing him.

Row. That's my boy! there's money for you: this child will come to good in time.

Boy. My master will miss me, Sir; I must go; but I wish you good luck.

A I R.

Arethusa at the Window above.

A Dialogue between her and Rowewell.

Row. Make haste, and away, my only dear;

Make haste, and away, away!

For all at the gate,

Your true lover does wait,

And prythee make no delay.

Are. O how shall I steal away, my love?

O how shall I steal away?

My daddy is near;

And I dare not for fear;

Pray come then another day.

Row. O this is the only day, my life,

O this is the only day!

I'll draw him aside.

While you throw the gates wide,

And then you may steal away.

Are. Then prythee make no delay, dear;

Then prythee make no delay;

We'll serve him a trick,

For I'll slip in the nick,

And with my true love away.

C H O R U S.

O Cupid, befriend a loving pair,

O Cupid, befriend us, we pray;

May our stratagem take,

For thine own sweet sake,

And, Amen! let all true lovers say.

[Arethusa withdraws.]

Enter Robin, as a Lawyer, and Soldiers.

Rob. So, my hearts of oak, are you all ready?

Sold. Yes, an't please your honour.

Row. You know your cue, then---to your post.

[They retire to a corner of the stage; he knocks smartly at the door.]

Rob. What, are you all asleep, or dead in the house, that you can't hear?

[Argus, holding the door in his hand.]

Arg. Sir! You are very hasty, methinks---

Rob. Sir! My business requires haste.

Arg. Sir! You had better make haste about it, for I know no business you have here.

Rob. Sir, I am come to talk with you on an affair of consequence.

Arg. Sir, I don't love talking; I know you not, and consequently can have no affairs with you.

Rob. Sir! N't know me!

Arg. Sir! it's enough for me to know myself.

Rob. A damn'd thwarting old dog, this same.

[Aside.]---Sir, I live but just in the next street.

Arg. Sir! If you liv'd at Jamaica 'tis the same thing to me.

Rob. [Aside.] I find coaxing won't do, I must change my note, or I shall never unkennel this old fox---[To him.] Well, Mr. Argus, there's no harm done, so take your leave of 3000l. You have enough of your own already. [Going.]

Arg. How! 3000l. I must enquire into this.

[Aside.] Sir! a word with you.

Rob. Sir, I have nothing to say to you, I took you

to be a prudent person, that knew the worth of money, and how to improve it; but I find I'm deceiv'd.

Arg. Sir, I hope you'll excuse my rudeness; but, you know, a man cannot be too cautious.

Rob. Sir, that's true, and therefore I excuse you; but I'd take such treatment from no man in England besides yourself.

Arg. Sir, I beg your pardon; but to the business.

Rob. Why thus it is: a spend-thrift young fellow is galloping through a plentiful fortune! I have lent 2000l. upon it already, and if you'll advance an equivalent, we'll fore-close the whole estate, and share it between us; for I know he can never redeem it.

Arg. A very judicious man; I'm sorry I affronted him. [Aside.] But how is this to be done?

Rob. Very easily, Sir---A word in your ear; a little more this way.

[Draws him aside; the soldiers get between him and the door.]

Arg. But the title, Sir, the title.

Rob. Do you doubt my veracity?

Arg. Not in the least, Sir; but one cannot be too sure.

Rob. That's very true, Sir, and therefore I'll make sure of you now I have you.

[Robin trips up his heels; the Soldiers blindfold and gag him, and stand over him, while Rowewell carries Arethusa off; after which they leave him, he making a great noise.]

Enter Mob.

All. What's the matter, what's the matter?

[They ungag him, &c.]

Arg. O neighbours, I'm robb'd and murder'd, ruin'd and undone for ever.

1st Mob. Wh., what's the matter, master?

Arg. There's a whole legion of thieves in my house; they gag'd and blindfolded me, and offer'd forty naked swords at my breast---I beg of you to assist me, or they'll strip the house in a minute.

2d Mob. Forty drawn swords, say you, Sir?

Arg. Ay, and more, I think, on my conscience.

2d Mob. Then look you, Sir, I'm a marry'd man, and have a large family, I would not venture amongst such a parcel of blood-thirsty rogues for the world; but if you please I'll call a constable.

All. Ay, ay, call a constable, call a constable.

Arg. I shan't have a penny left, if we stay for a constable---I am but one man, and as old as I am, I'll lead the way, if you'll follow me.

All. Ay, ay, in, in, follow, follow, huzza!

1st Mob. Prythee, Jack, do you go in, if you come to that.

3d Mob. I go in! what should I go in for? I have lost nothing.

Wom. What, nobody to help the poor old gentlewoman; odds bobs! if I was a man, I'd follow him myself.

3d Mob. Why don't you, then? What occasion-abieness have I to be kill'd for him, or you either.

Enter Robin as Constable.

All. Here's Mr. Constable, here's Mr. Constable.

Rob. Silence, in the king's name.

All. Ay, silence, silence.

Rob. What's the meaning of this riot? Who makes all the disturbance?

1st Mob. I'll tell you, Mr. Constable.

3d Mob. And't please your worship, let me speak.

Rob. Ay, this man talks like a man of parts---What's the matter, friend?

3d Mob. And't please your noble worship's honour and glory, we are his Majesty's liege subjects, and were terrify'd out of our habitations and dwelling-places by a cry from abroad, which your noble

worship must understand was occasionable by the gentleman of this house, who was so unfortunate as to be killed by thieves, who are now in his house to the numeration of above forty, and't please your worship, all compleatly arm'd with powder and ball, back-swords, pistols, bayonets, and blunderbuffes.

Rob. But what is to be done in this case?

3d Mob. Why, an please your worship, knowing your noble honour to be the king's majesty's noble officer of the peace, we thought 'twas best your honour shou'd come and terrify these rogues away with your noble authority.

Rob. Well said, very well said, indeed!—Gentlemen, I am the king's officer, and I command you, in the king's name, to aid and assist me to call those rogues out of the house—Who's within there? I charge you come out in the king's name, and submit yourselves to our royal authority.

Argus from the house.

2d Mob. This is the gentleman that was kill'd, and please your worship.

Arg. O! neighbours, I'm ruin'd and undone for ever! They have taken away all that's dear to me in the world.

1st Mob. That's his money; 'tis a sad covetous dog.

Rob. Why what's the matter? What have they done?

Arg. O! They have taken my child from me, my Thusy!

Rob. Good lack!

3d Mob. Marry come up, what valuation can she be?—But have they taken nothing else?

Arg. Wou'd they had stript my house of ev'ry pennyworth, so they had left my child.

1st Mob. That's a lye, I believe! for he loves his money more than his soul, and would sooner part with that than a groat.

Arg. This is the captain's doings; but I'll have him hanged.

Rob. But where are the thieves?

Arg. Gone, gone, beyond all hopes of pursuit.

2d Mob. What! are they gone! Then, come neighbours, let us go in, and kill every mother's child of 'm.

Rob. Hold, I charge you to commit no murder; follow me, and we'll apprehend them.

Arg. Go, villains, cowards, scoundrels, or I shall suspect you are the thieves that mean to rob me of what is yet left. How brave you are, now all the danger's over?—Oh! sirrah, you dog! [*Looking at Robin.*] You are that rogue Robin, the captain's man. Seize him, neighbours! seize him!

Rob. [*Aside.*] I don't care what you do, for the job's over, I see my master coming.

Arg. Why don't you seize him, I say?

1st Mob. Not we; we have lost too much time about an old fool already.

2d Mob. Ay, the next time you're bound and gag'd, you shall lie and be damn'd for me.

3d Mob. Ay, and me too—Come along, neighbours, come along. [*Exeunt Mob.*]

Enter Rowewell, Hearty, Arethusa, Betty, and Robin.

Arg. Bless me! who have we got here? O Thusy! Thusy! I had rather never have seen thee again, than have found you in such company.

Are. Sir, I hope my husband's company is not criminal?

Arg. Your husband? who's your husband, housewife? that scoundrel, captain—Out of my sight, thou ungracious wretch!--I'll go make my will this instant---And you, you villain, how dare you to look me in the face after all this---I'll have you hang'd, sirrah! I will so.

Heart. O fye, brother Argus, moderate your passion. It ill becomes the friendship you owe Ned Northy, to vilify and affront his only child, and for no other crime than improving that friendship which has ever been between us.

Arg. Ha! my dear friend alive! I heard thou wert dead in the Indies---and is that thy son? and my godson too, if I am not mistaken.

Heart. The very same---the last and best remains of our family; forc'd by my wife's cruelty, and my absence, to the army. My wife is since dead, and the son she had by her former husband, whom she intended to heir my estate; but fortune guided me by mere chance to my dear boy, who, after twenty years absence, and changing my name, knew me not, till I just now discovered myself to him and your fair daughter, whom I will make him deserve by thirty thousand pounds, which I brought from India, besides what real estate I may leave him at my death.

Arg. And to match that, old boy! my daughter shall have every penny of mine, besides her uncle's legacy---Ah! you young rogue, had I known you, I would not have us'd you so roughly---however, since you have won my girl so bravely, take her, and welcome---but you must excuse all faults---the old man meant all for the best; you must not be angry.

Rowe. Sir, on the contrary, we ought to beg your pardon for the many disquiets we have given you; and with your pardon, we crave your blessing.

[*Kneeling.*]

Arg. You have it, children, with all my heart. Adod, I am so transported, I don't know whether I walk or fly.

Are. May your joy be everlasting.

Rowewell and Arethusa embracing.

D U E T T O.

*Thus fondly caressing
My idol, my treasure,
How great is the blessing!
How sweet is the pleasure!
With joy I behold thee,
And dead on thy charms;
Thus while I enfold thee,
I've heav'n in my arms.*



t,
 is
 to
 ou
 f.
 ed
 for
 ch
 ou
 and
 ns
 my
 and
 in-
 ty
 oc,
 fair
 rty
 be-
 my
 nter
 le's
 rou,
 ver,
 her,
 the
 t be
 beg
 iven
 ling.
 ling.
 eart.
 ther